

## THE BLUE UMBRELLA

When ten-year-old Binya becomes the proud owner of the most beautiful blue umbrella in the world, her happiness knows no bounds. From then on, the umbrella is her constant companion and protector. But there are others, in the village, who would also like the umbrella for their own and will go to great lengths to get it.

Sita lives with her grandparents on a tiny island in the middle of a river. One day, when her grandparents are away the river begins to rise. The friendly stretch of water becomes an angry, rushing flood and Sita watches as her beloved home is washed away. Will she be able to save herself?

This Amar Chitra Katha brings together *The Blue Umbrella* and *Angry River*, two wonderful stories from one of India's most loved storywriters, Ruskin Bond.

### ACK FABLES AND HUMOUR:

THE ADVENTURES OF  
BADDU & CHHOTU



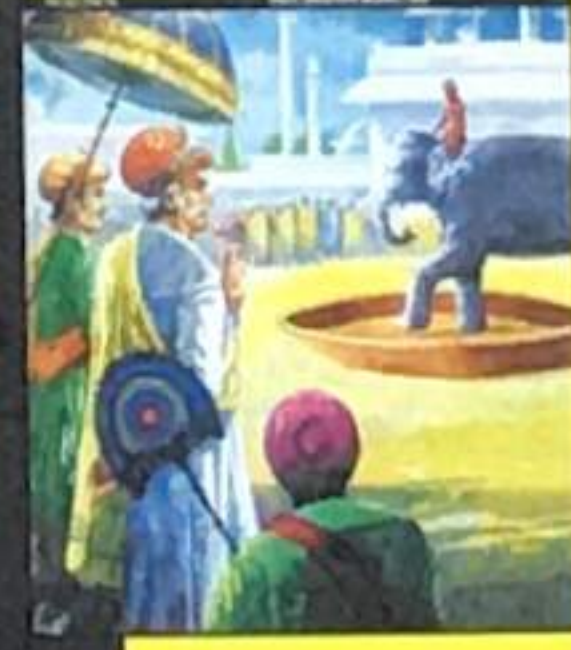
GOPAL THE JESTER



RAMAN  
OF TENALI



BIRBAL  
THE GENIUS



### ALSO LOOK FOR:

THE GOLDEN  
MONGOOSE



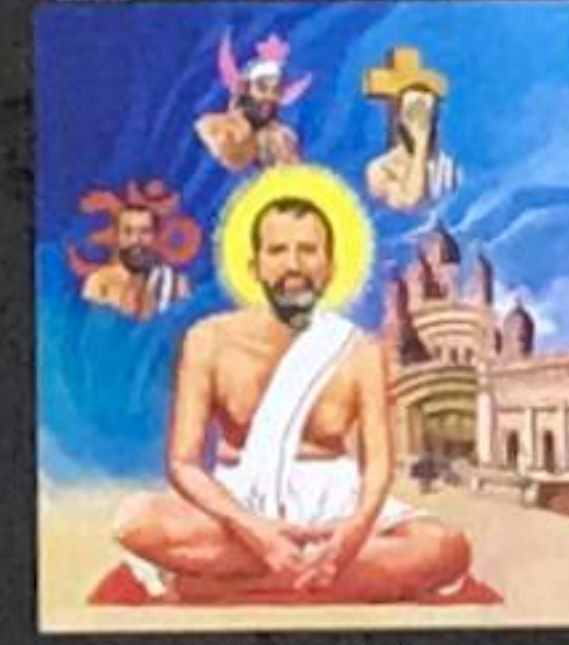
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"Amar Chitra Kathas are a glorious tribute to India's rich cultural heritage. These books have been an integral part of my children's early years, as they have been for many other families across India. Comics are a great way of reaching out to children, inculcating reading habits and driving their quest to learn more about our roots."

NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS

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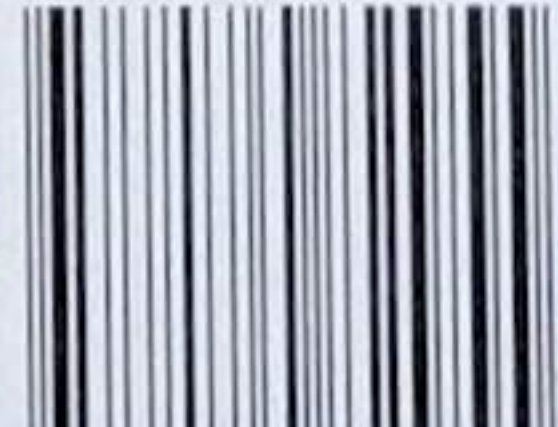
# THE BLUE UMBRELLA

STORIES BY RUSKIN BOND

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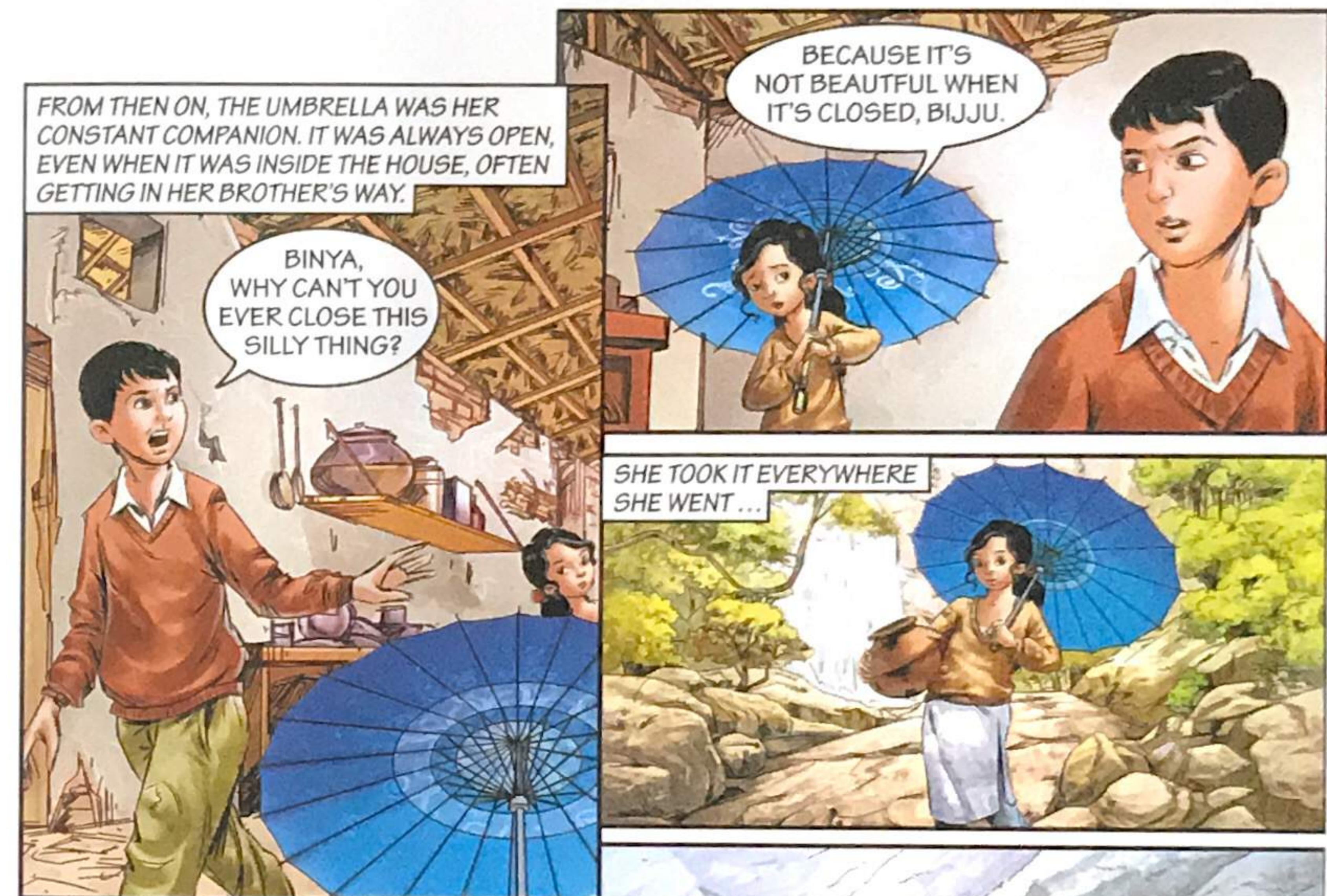
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BIJU AND BINYA WILL NOT TAKE ANYTHING FROM ME ON CREDIT. SIGH! I'LL NEVER GET HOLD OF THE BLUE UMBRELLA.

IT WASN'T JUST RAM BHAROSA WHO WANTED THE UMBRELLA. IN THE SCHOOLMASTER'S HOUSE -

THAT FARMER'S DAUGHTER HAS SUCH A GORGEOUS UMBRELLA WHILE I, A SECOND-CLASS B.A., HAVE TO MANAGE WITH AN ORDINARY ONE.

WHY DON'T WE GET YOURS DYED BLUE THEN?

OH, DON'T BE SILLY! OF ALL THE IDEAS!

EVEN THE PUJARI WHO TOOK CARE OF THE TEMPLE WANTED IT.

I'M GOING TO BUY MYSELF A MULTI-COLOURED UMBRELLA THE NEXT TIME I GO TO TOWN.

HOWEVER, THE CHILDEN ADMIRIED IT OPENLY.

IT'S SO PRETTY, BINYA!

AND THE BLUE IS SO BRIGHT... IT'S SUCH A NICE SHADE!

HERE, YOU CAN HOLD IT FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

THEN THE MONSOON CAME, AND BIG BLACK CLOUDS PILED UP IN THE SKY.

BOOM

PLOP!

HURRAY! THAT IS THE FIRST DROP.

THE DROPS MULTIPLIED, BECAME LARGER, AND STARTED HAMMERING AGAINST THE BLUE SILK.

EVEN THOUGH THE UMBRELLA WASN'T REALLY A RAIN-UMBRELLA, IT HELD UP BRAVELY.

FEELS AS IF I'M STANDING UNDER A WATERFALL!

BINYA! RUN HOME, CHILD. YOU'LL GET SOAKED.

I'VE WAITED FOR THE RAIN FOR SO LONG. I'M NOT GOING HOME SO QUICKLY!

BINYA ONLY BEAMED.

ONE DAY -

A COBRA!

A FEW LOOSE PEBBLES CLATTERING DOWN DISTURBED IT.



AS THE SNAKE LUNGED AT BINYA -



TAKE THAT!



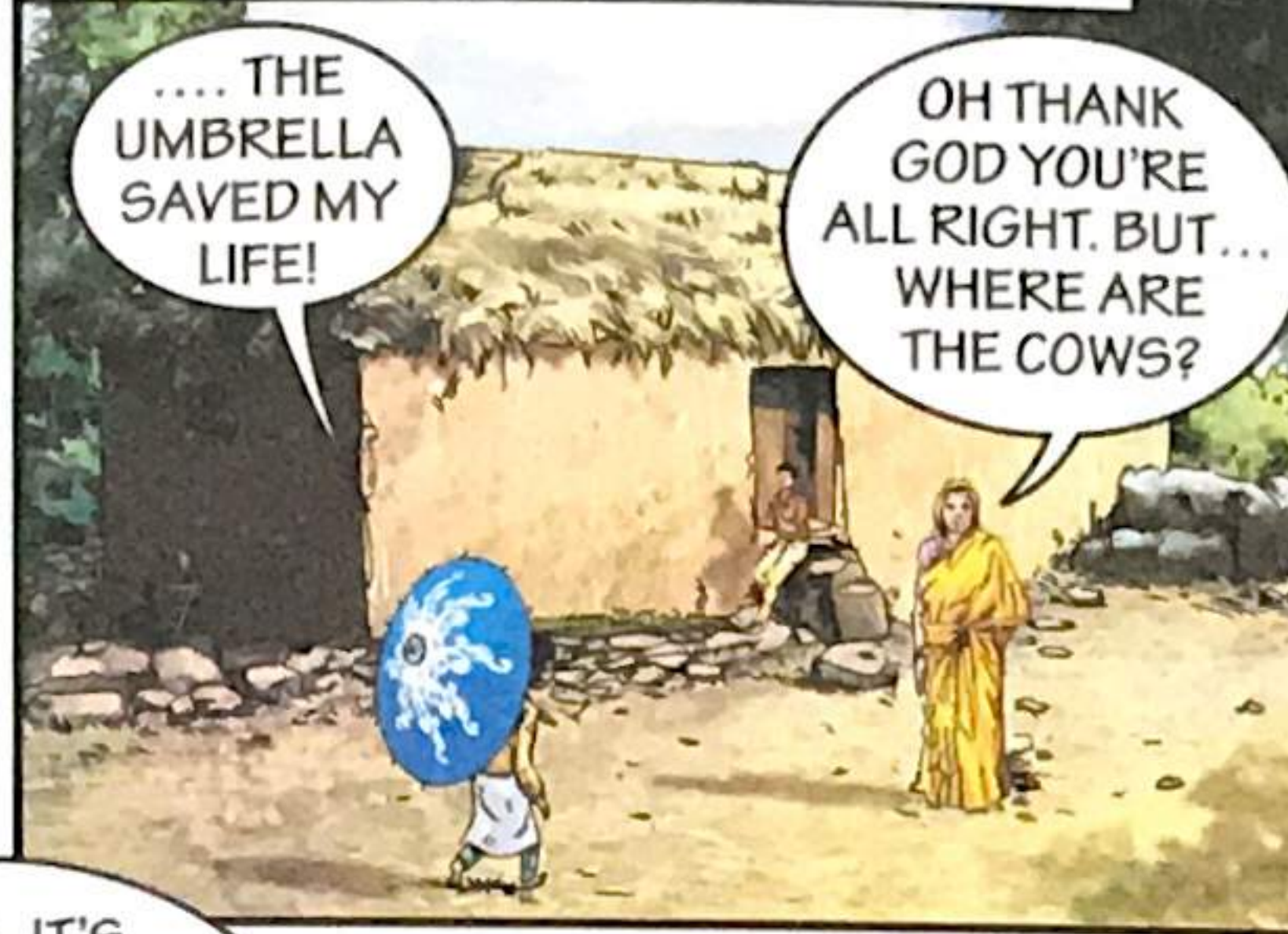
OH...ER, I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT THEM.



HA HA, IT'S ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO GET THEM. WILL YOU LEND ME YOUR UMBRELLA? WHAT IF I SEE ANY SNAKES AROUND?

CARRY A STICK!

BINYA RUSHED HOME AND TOLD THE STORY.



... THE UMBRELLA SAVED MY LIFE!

OH THANK GOD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT. BUT... WHERE ARE THE COWS?

WITH TIME, THE COLOUR OF THE UMBRELLA FADED, BUT IT WAS STILL BEAUTIFUL. BINYA'S FONDNESS FOR IT REMAINED THE SAME...



OH, NOTHING, RAJARAM. IT'S JUST A SICKNESS THAT HAS COME UPON ME. IT'S ALL DUE TO THAT GIRL BINYA AND HER WRETCHED UMBRELLA.

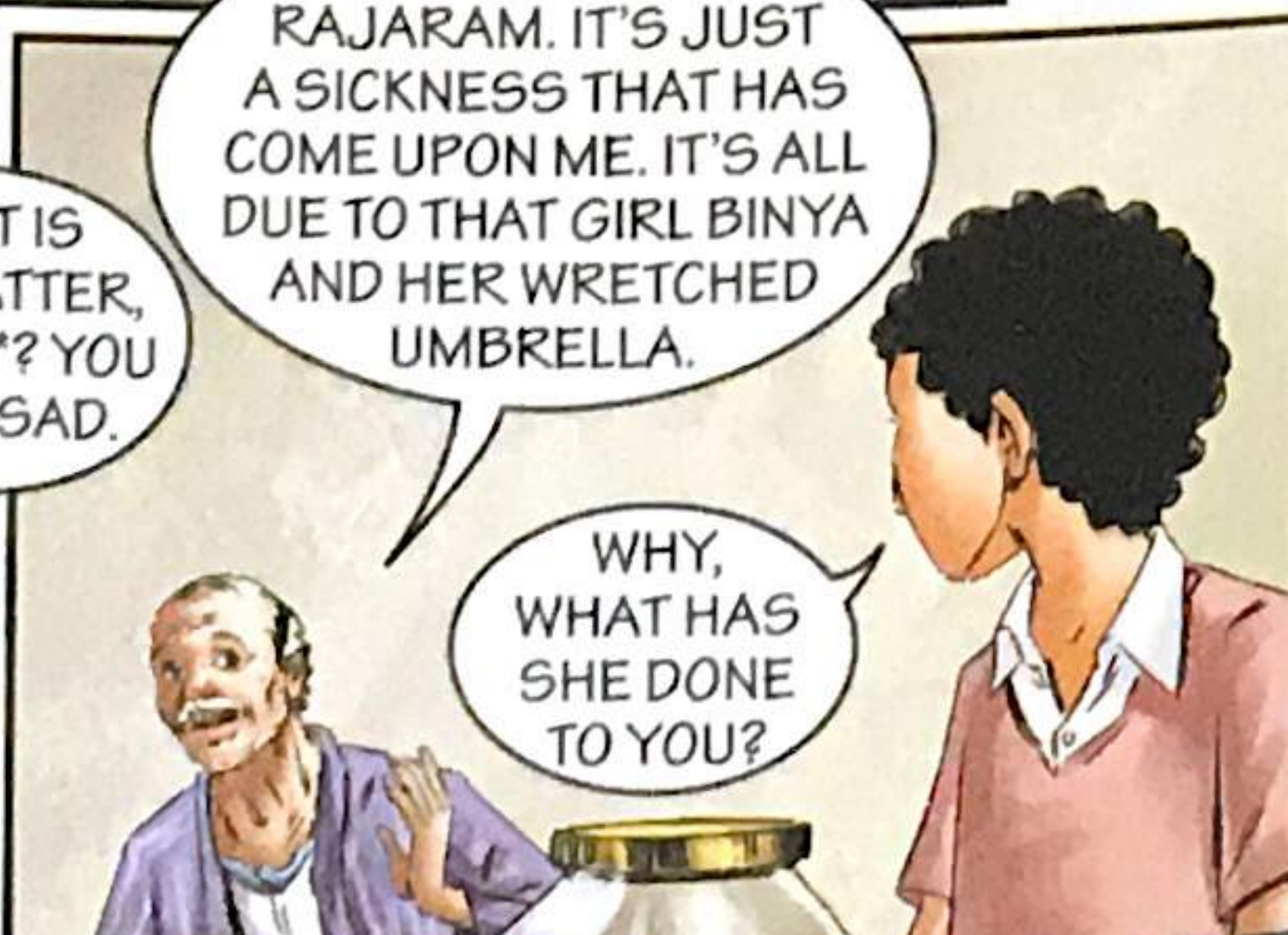
WHY, WHAT HAS SHE DONE TO YOU?

... AND SO DID RAM BHAROSA'S DESIRE TO POSSESS IT.



SIGH!

WHAT IS THE MATTER, BABUJI\*? YOU SEEM SAD.



RAM BHAROSA HAD HIRED RAJARAM FROM THE NEXT VILLAGE TO DO HIS WASHING-UP AND TO RUN ERRANDS.

\* TERM OF RESPECT IN HINDI

RAM BHAROSA TOLD RAJARAM ALL HIS WOES.



HMM... WHAT WILL YOU GIVE ME, BABUJI, IF I GET THE UMBRELLA FOR YOU?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



THE BOY WAS SILENT.



TAKE IT TO TEHRI AND HAVE IT DYED RED.

YOU'RE A SHARP BOY. I'LL GIVE YOU TWO RUPEES.

THREE.

TWO.

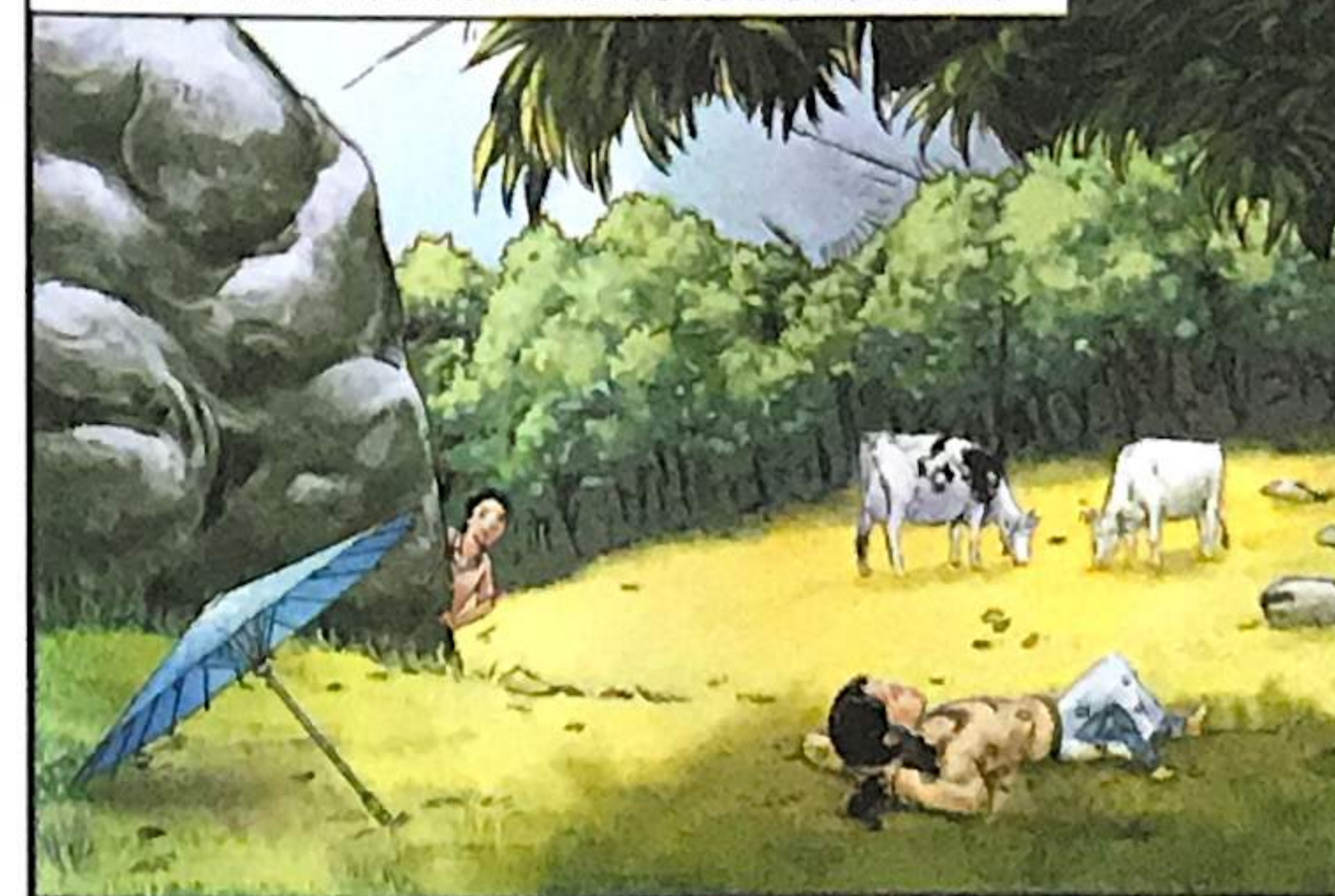
NO.

OH FINE, YOU WRETCHED BOY!



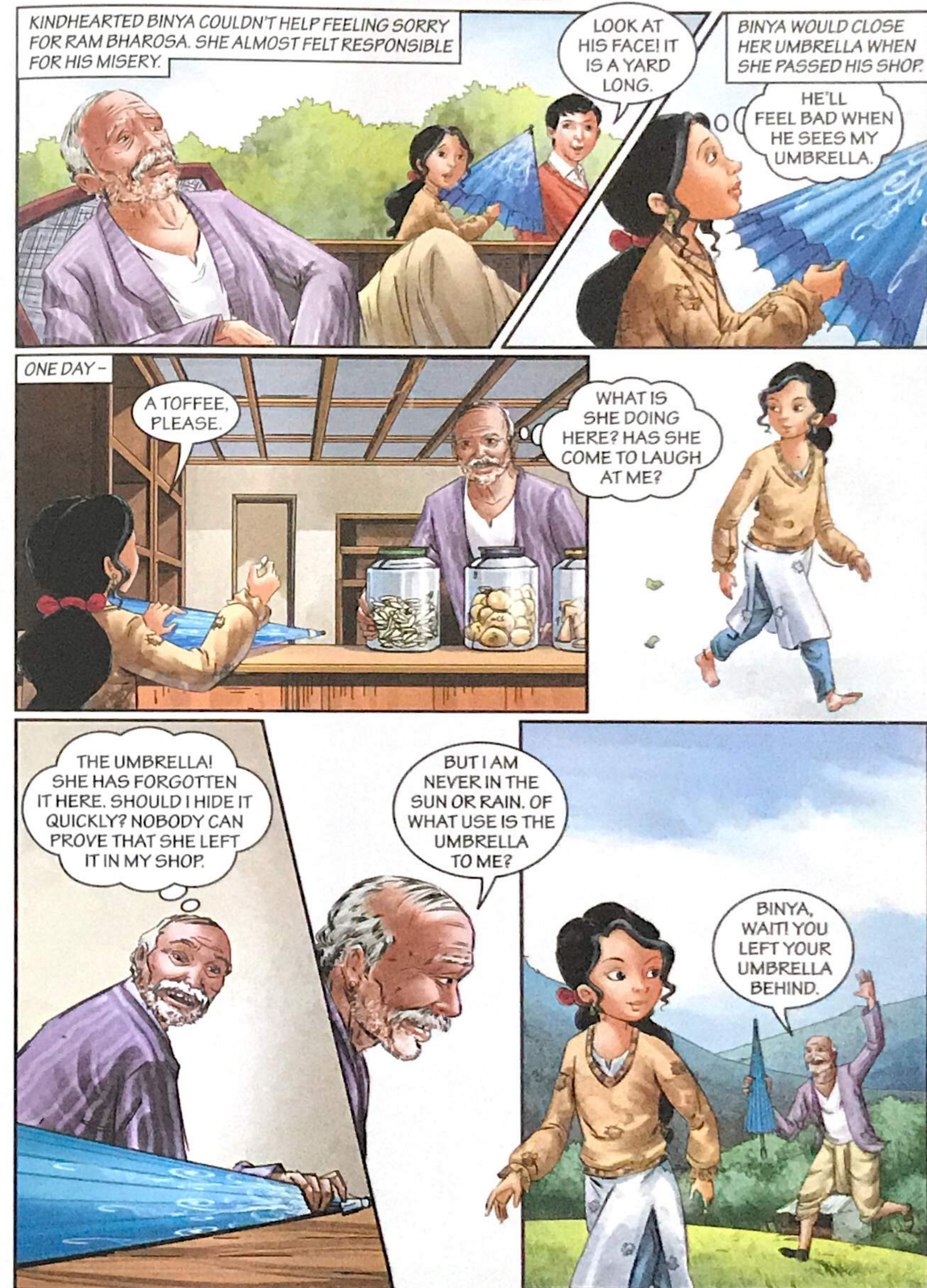
AND A DEAL WAS STRUCK.

RAJARAM WAITED FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT AND -

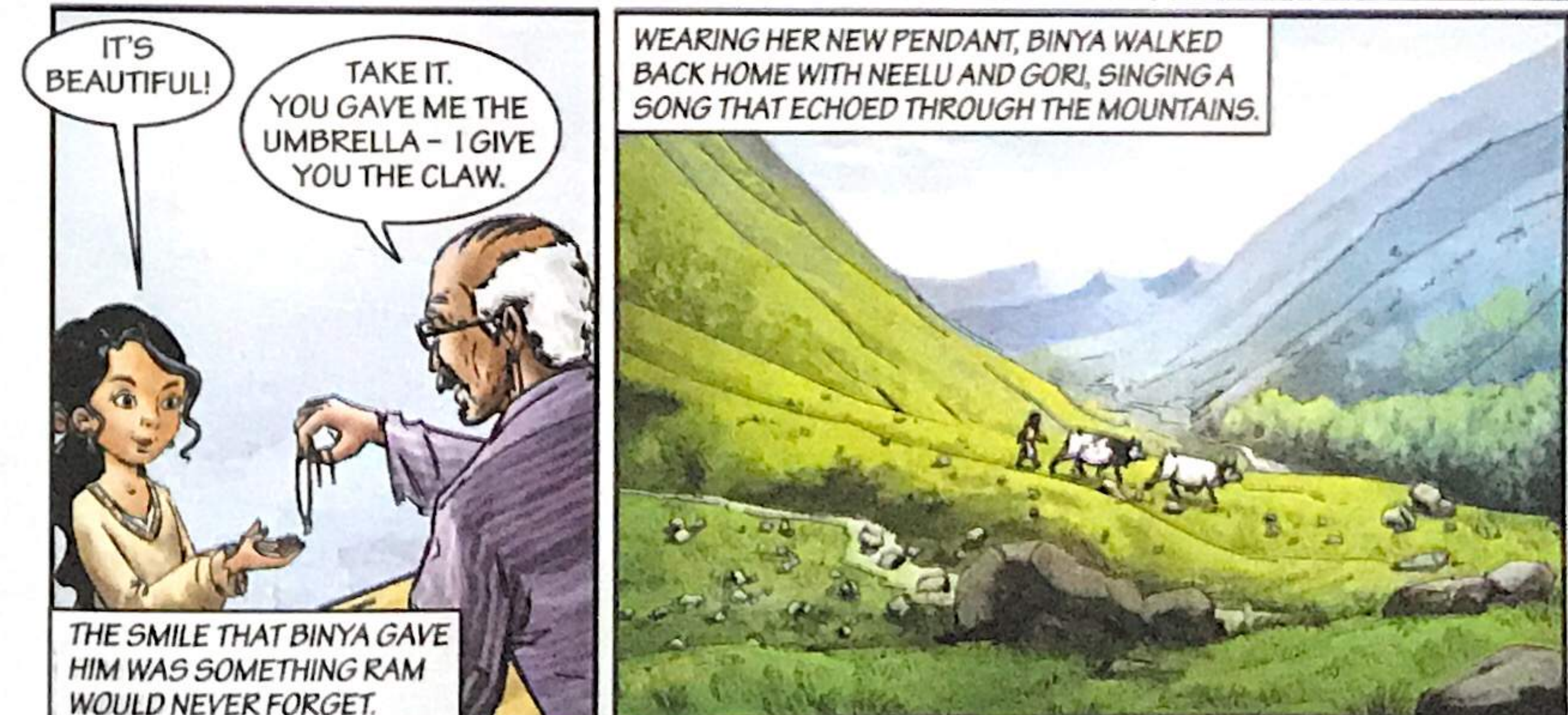
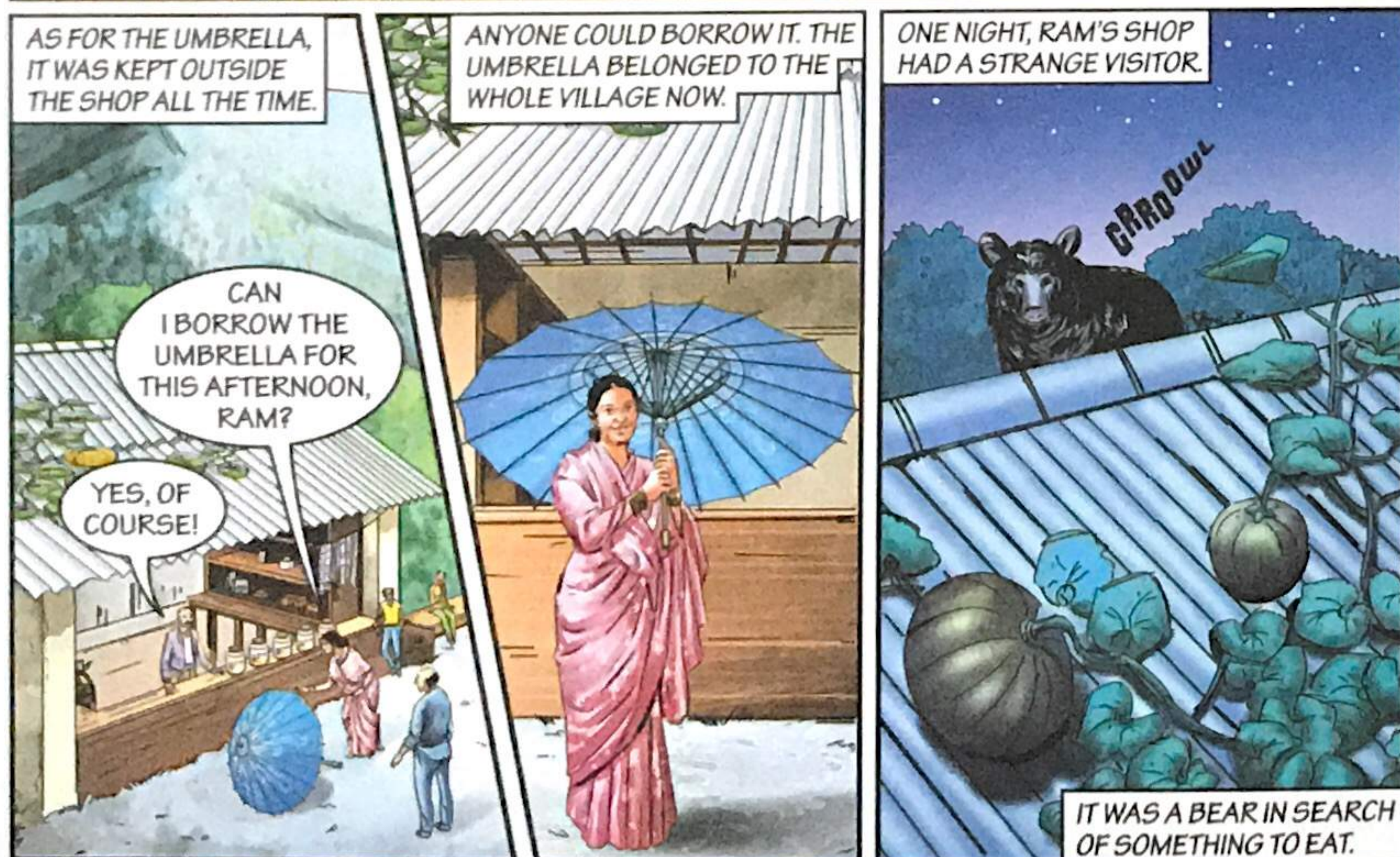
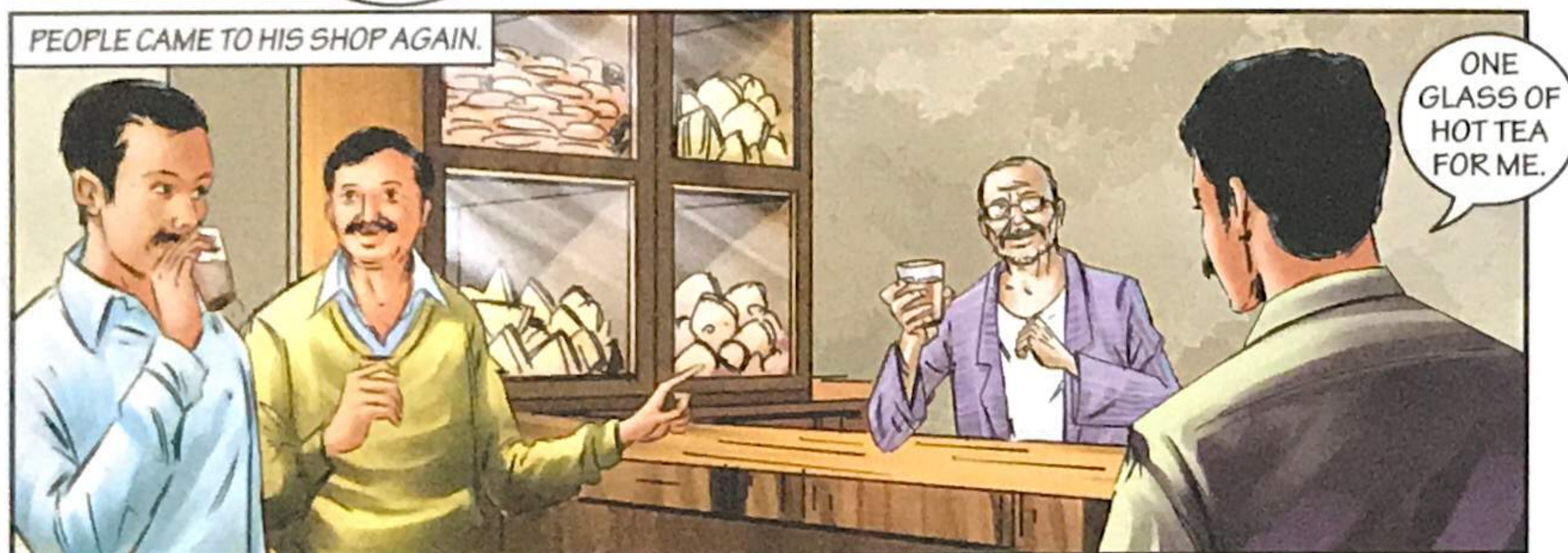
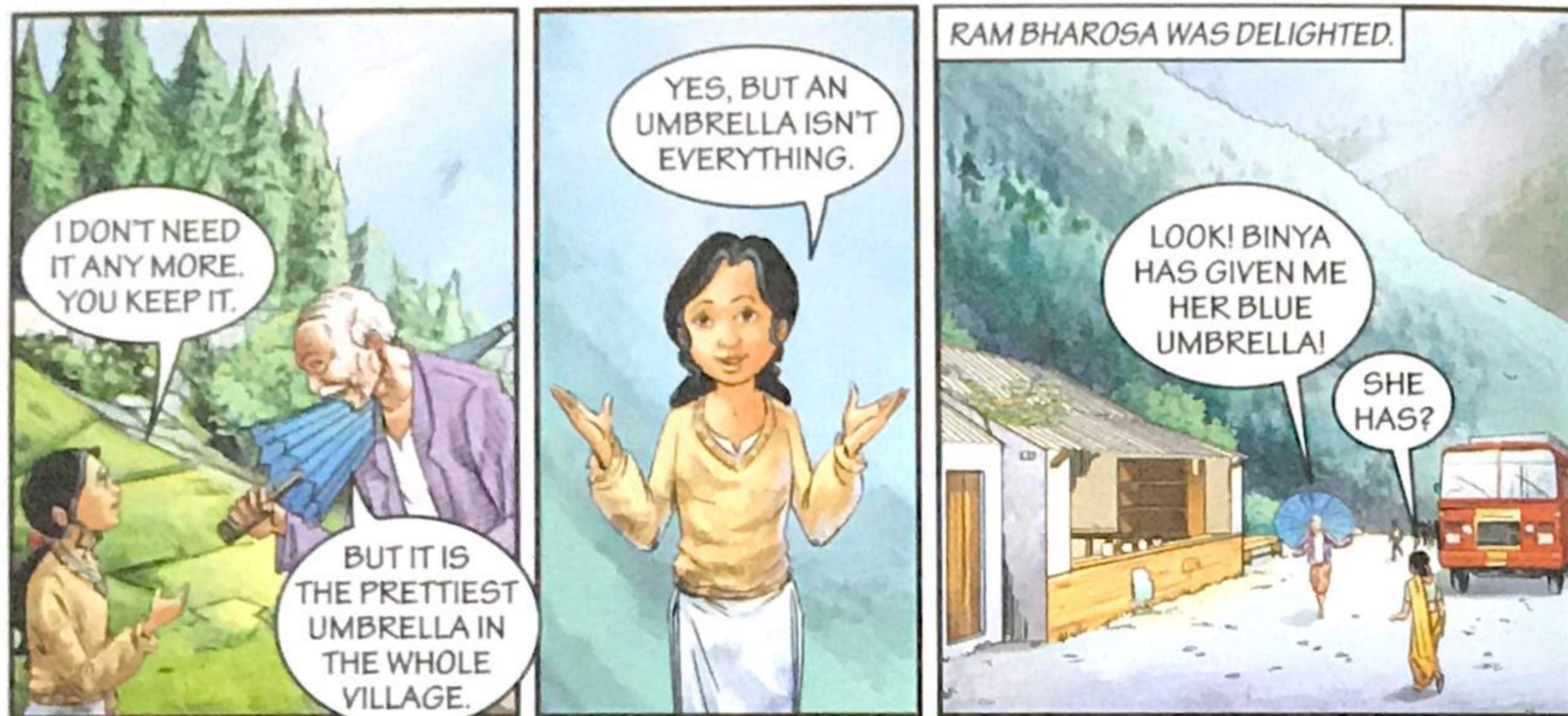


HEY!

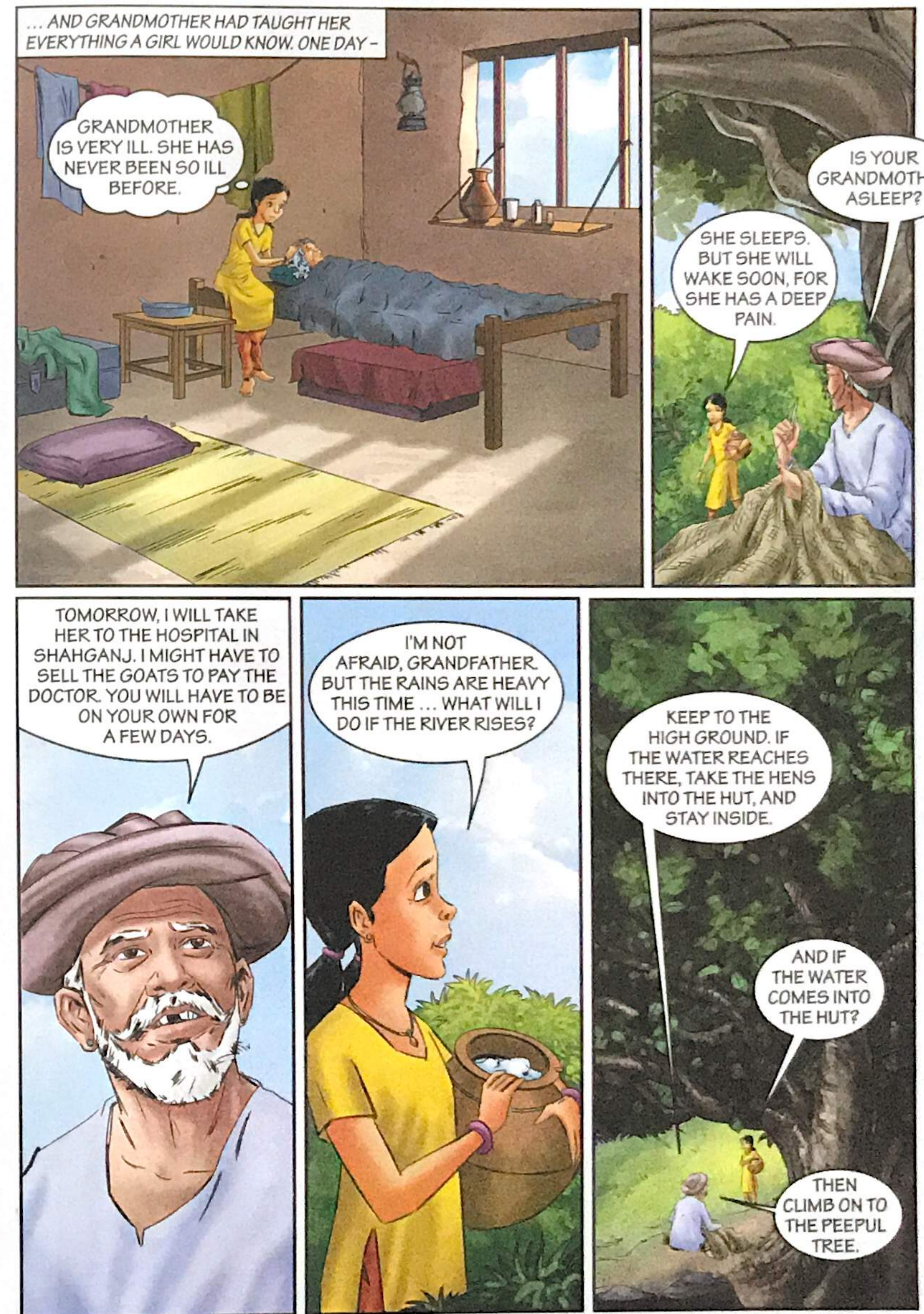
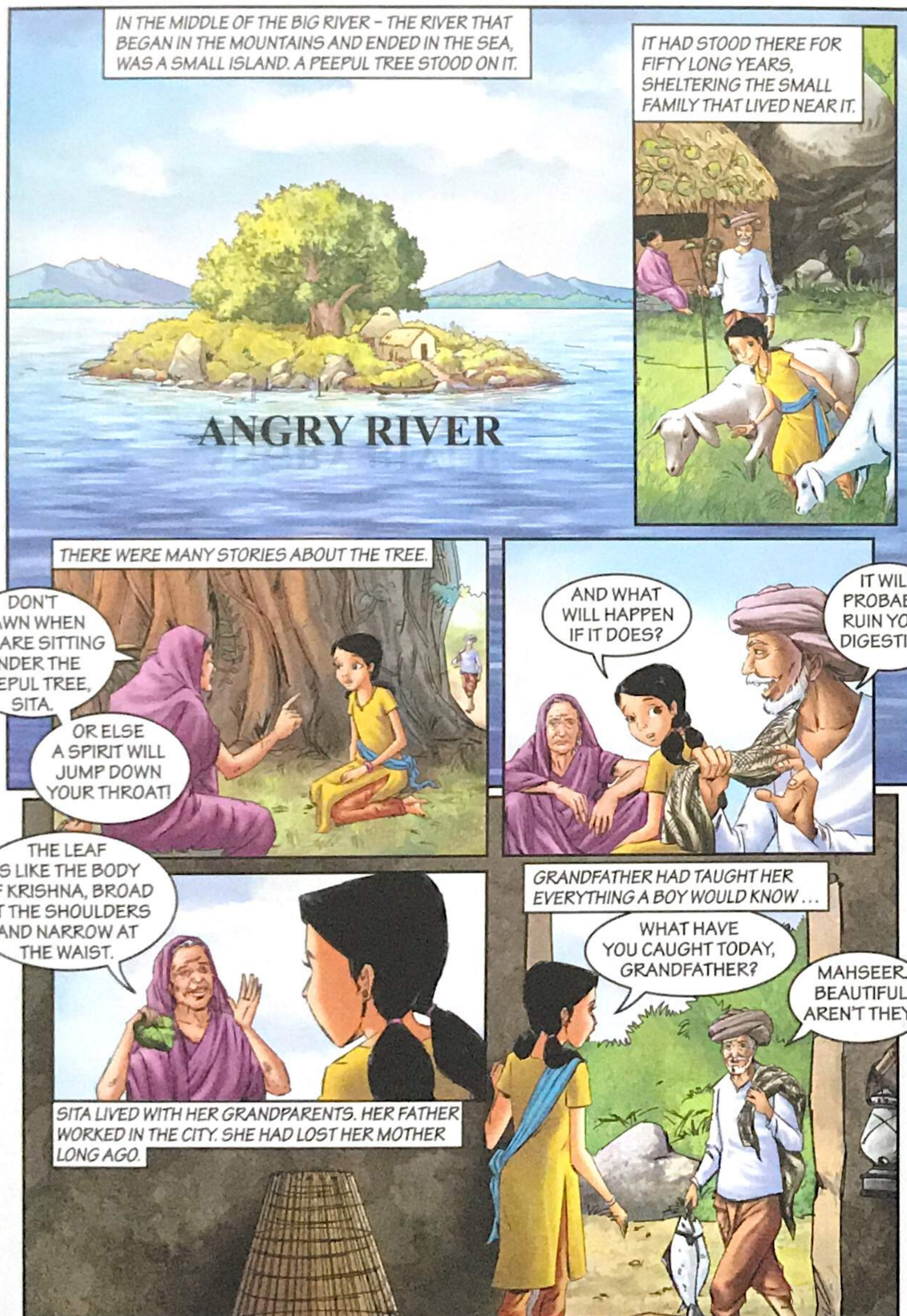




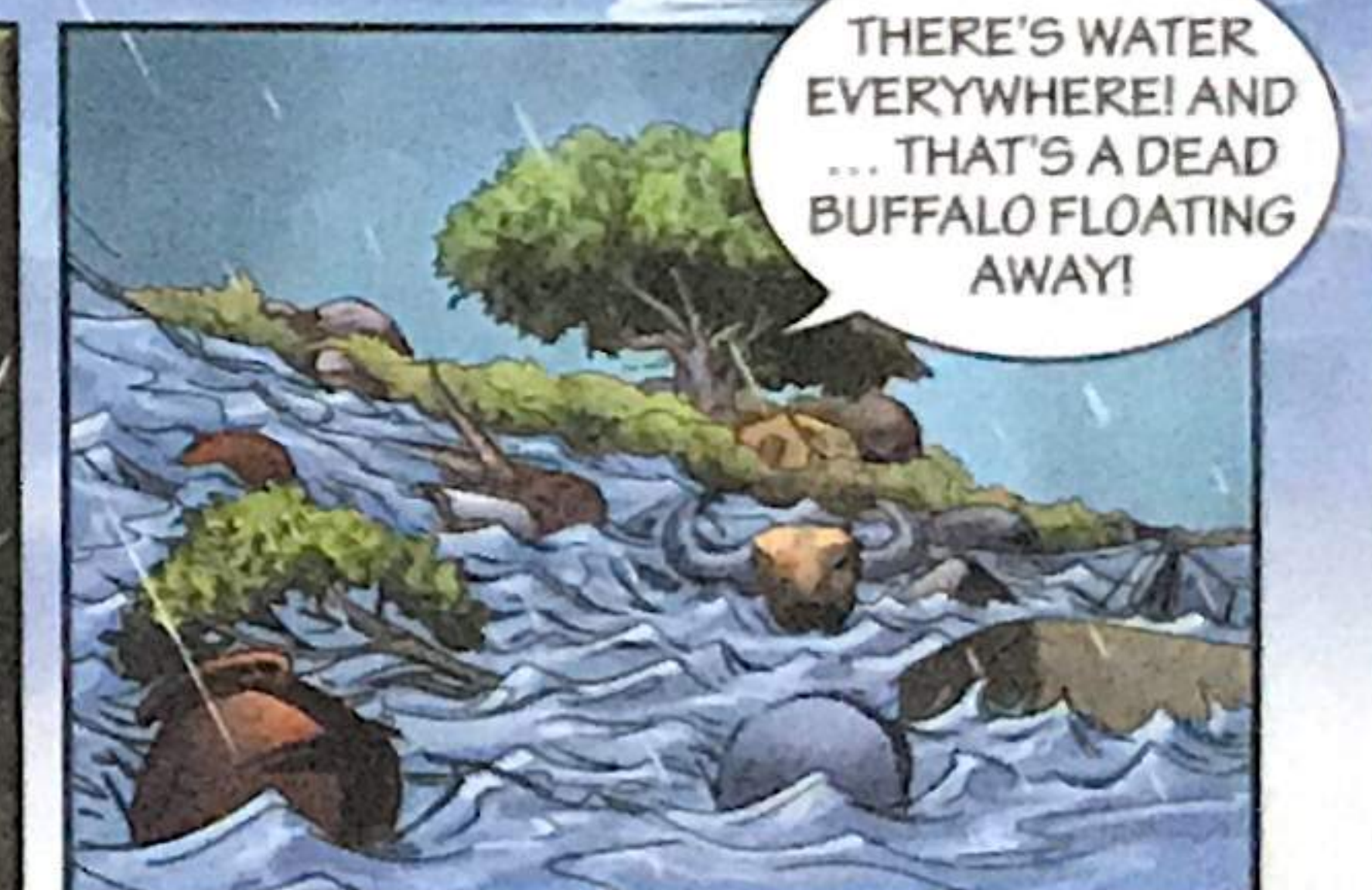
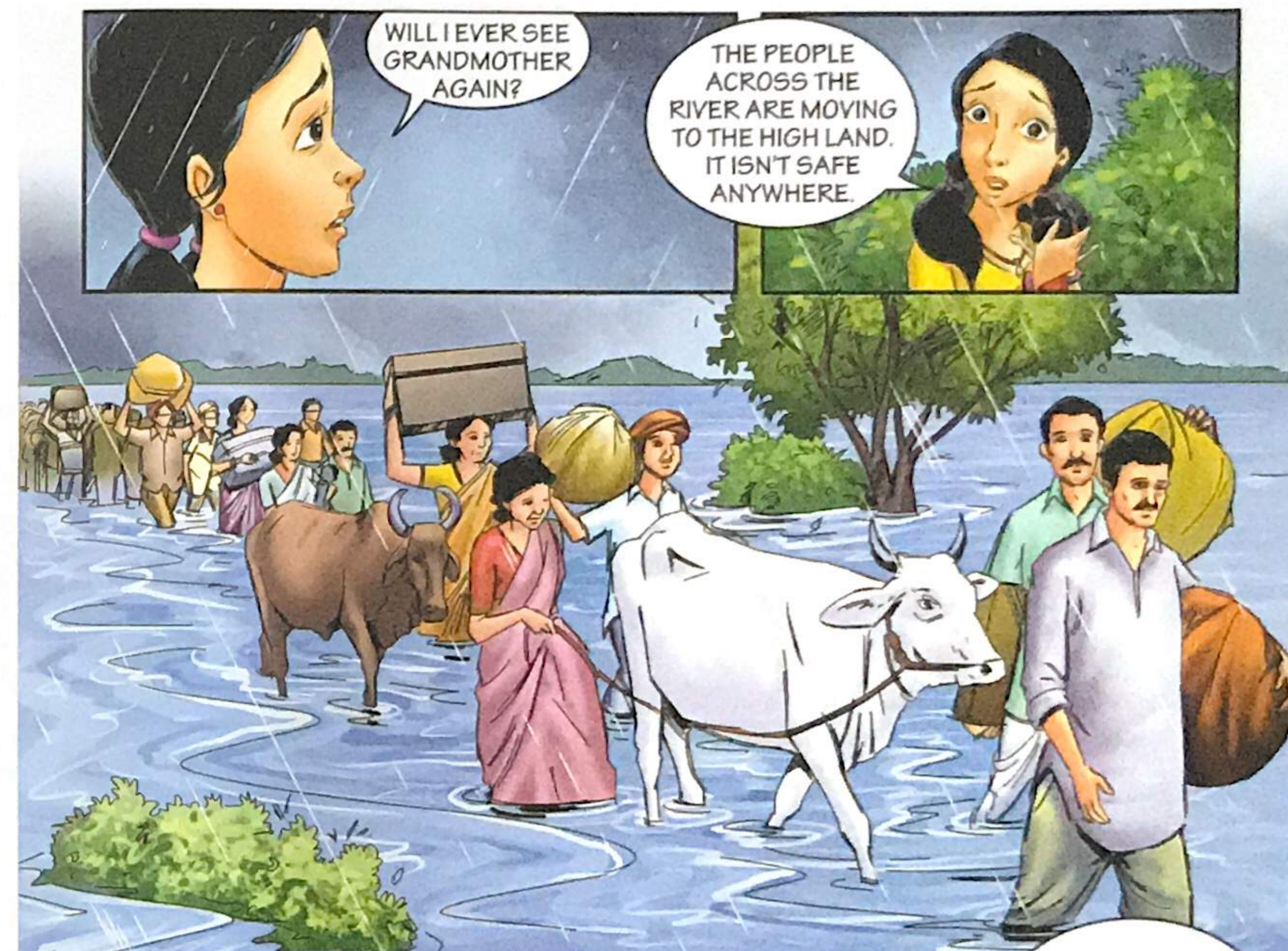
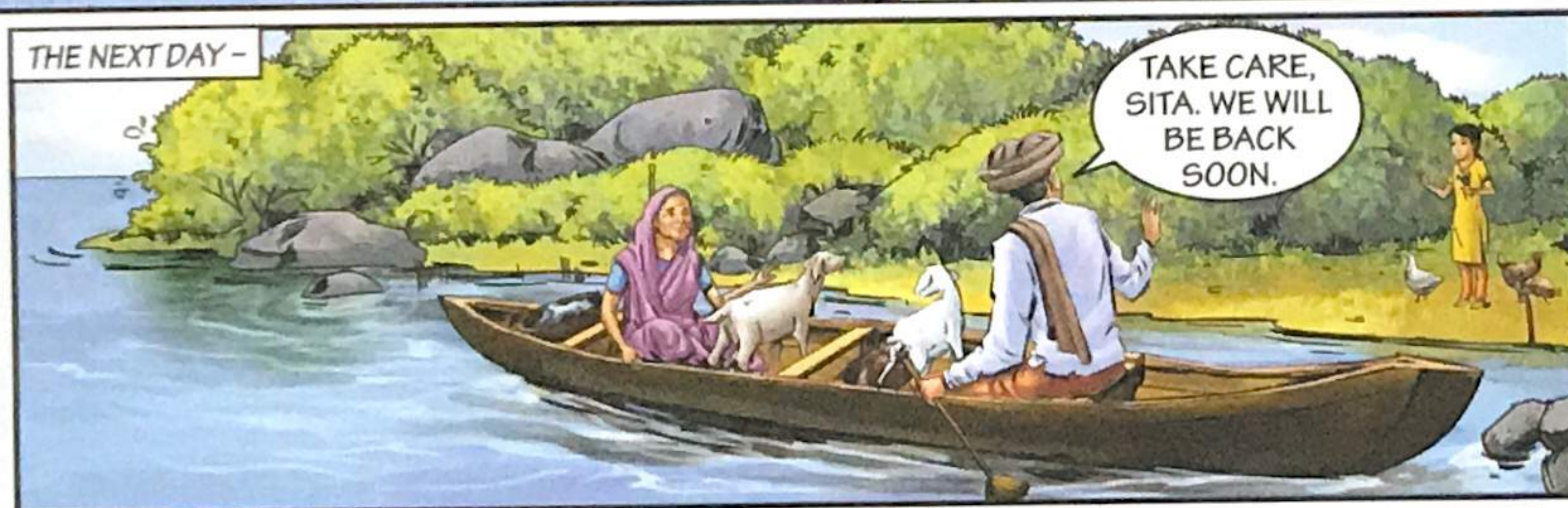
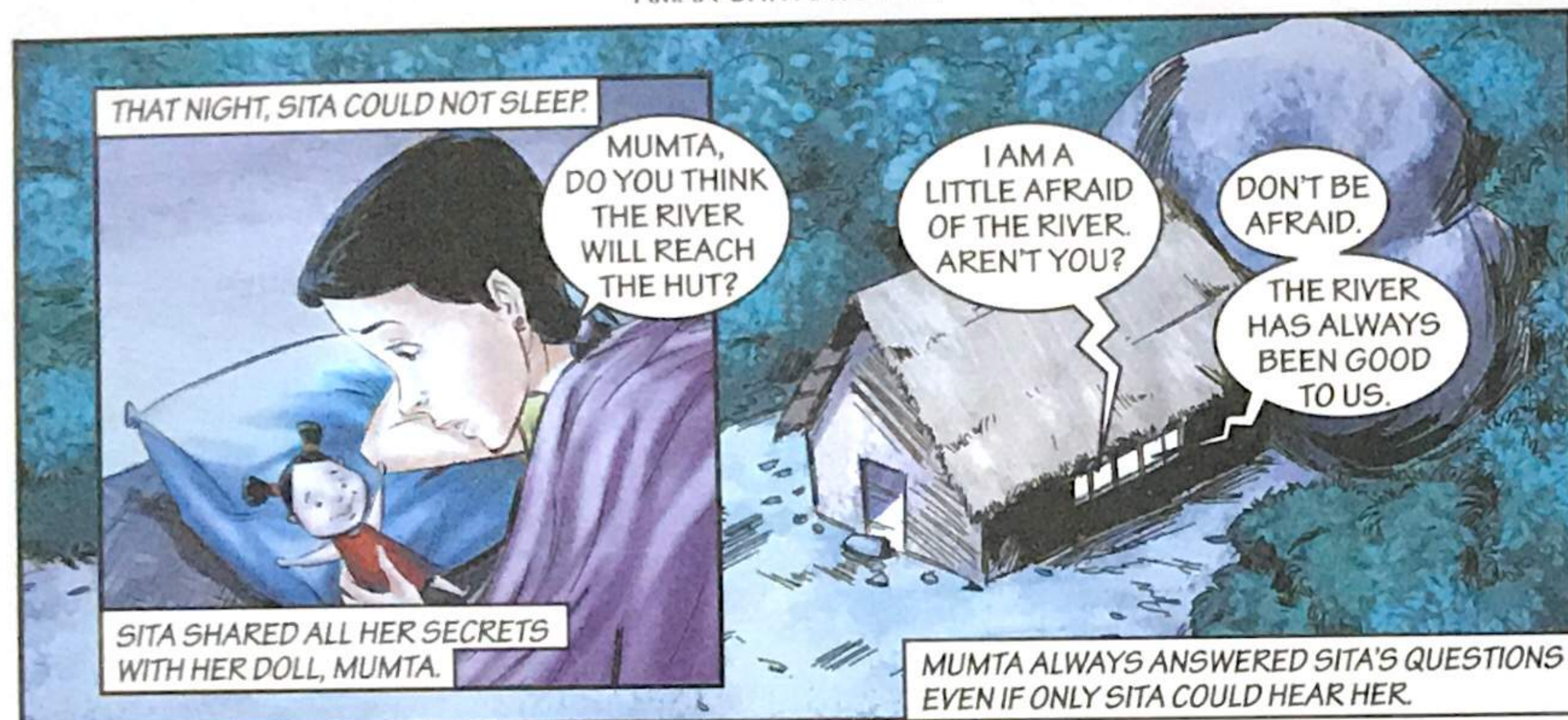


















IT MOVED INTO THE MAIN CURRENT OF THE RIVER, AS SITA CLUNG TIGHTLY TO ONE OF THE BRANCHES.



ANY MOMENT NOW, THE TREE WILL TURN OVER AND I'LL BE IN THE WATER.

THOSE BOATS ARE TOO FAR AWAY. THE PEOPLE WON'T BE ABLE TO HEAR ME.



WITH ACHING ARMS SITA CLUNG ON TILL -

WE'VE HIT A SAND BANK. I MUST TRY SWIMMING.



HERE, TAKE MY HAND.



I'M NEVER GOING TO SEE IT AGAIN.



JUST THEN -

HELLOOOOOO!

SOMEONE'S CALLING!



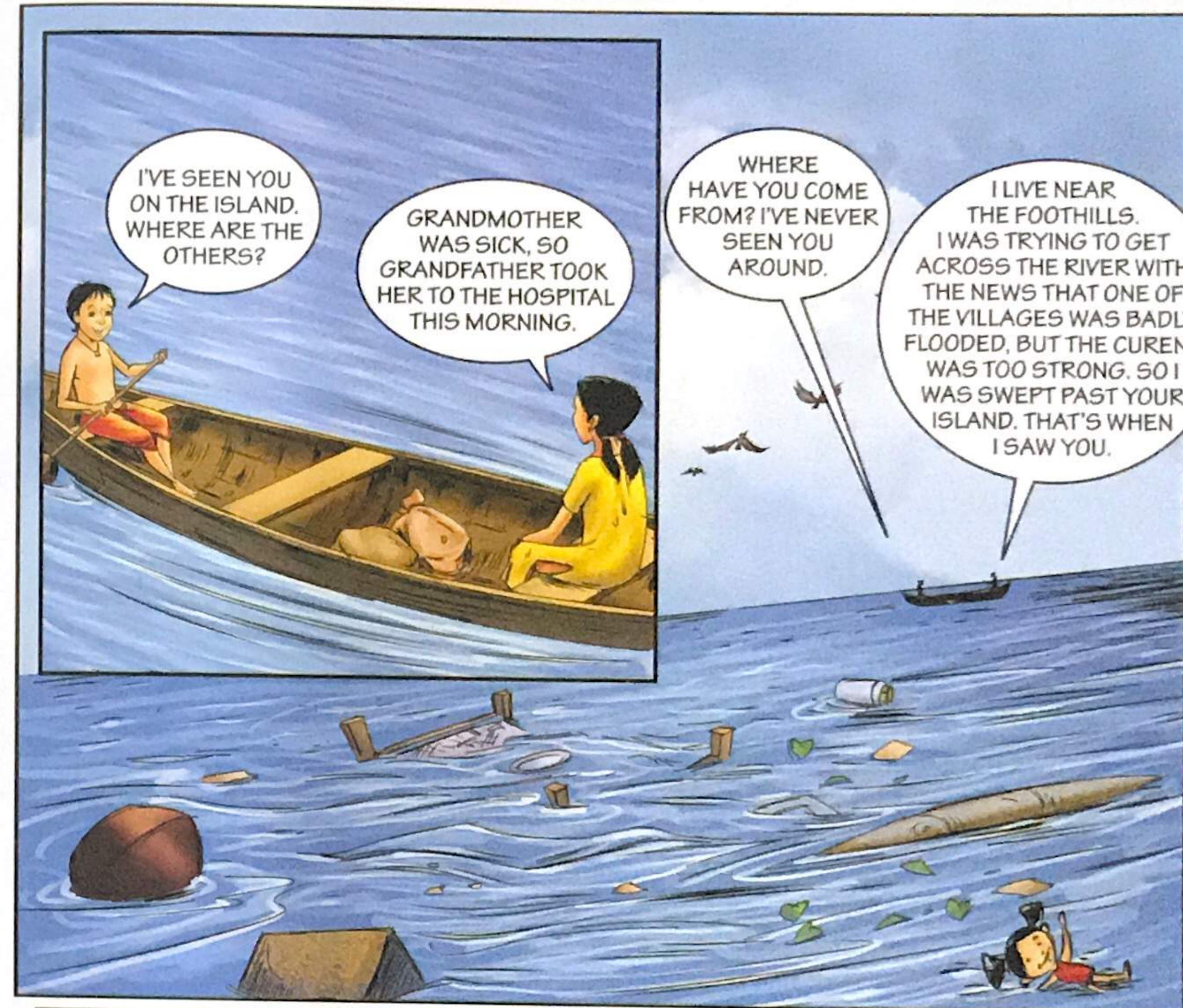
THE LITTLE BOAT MOVED SWIFTLY DOWN THE RIVER, LEAVING THE TREE FAR BEHIND.

I'VE SEEN YOU ON THE ISLAND. WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?

GRANDMOTHER WAS SICK, SO GRANDFATHER TOOK HER TO THE HOSPITAL THIS MORNING.

WHERE HAVE YOU COME FROM? I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU AROUND.

I LIVE NEAR THE FOOTHILLS. I WAS TRYING TO GET ACROSS THE RIVER WITH THE NEWS THAT ONE OF THE VILLAGES WAS BADLY FLOODED, BUT THE CURRENT WAS TOO STRONG. SO I WAS SWEEPED PAST YOUR ISLAND. THAT'S WHEN I SAW YOU.



THE BOY TOOK OUT TWO MANGOES FOR THEM.

THANK YOU! I HAVEN'T TASTED ONE IN OVER A YEAR.



MY NAME IS KRISHAN. MY FATHER HAS MANY COWS AND BUFFALOES, BUT SEVERAL HAVE BEEN LOST IN THE FLOOD.

I SUPPOSE YOU GO TO SCHOOL.

OH YES, THERE IS ONE NOT FAR FROM OUR VILLAGE. DO YOU HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL?

NO, THERE IS TOO MUCH WORK AT HOME.

HER HEART SANK WHEN SHE SAID THE WORD 'HOME'.









BUT SOON, THE SUN GREW WARMER AND WOKE THE BOY.



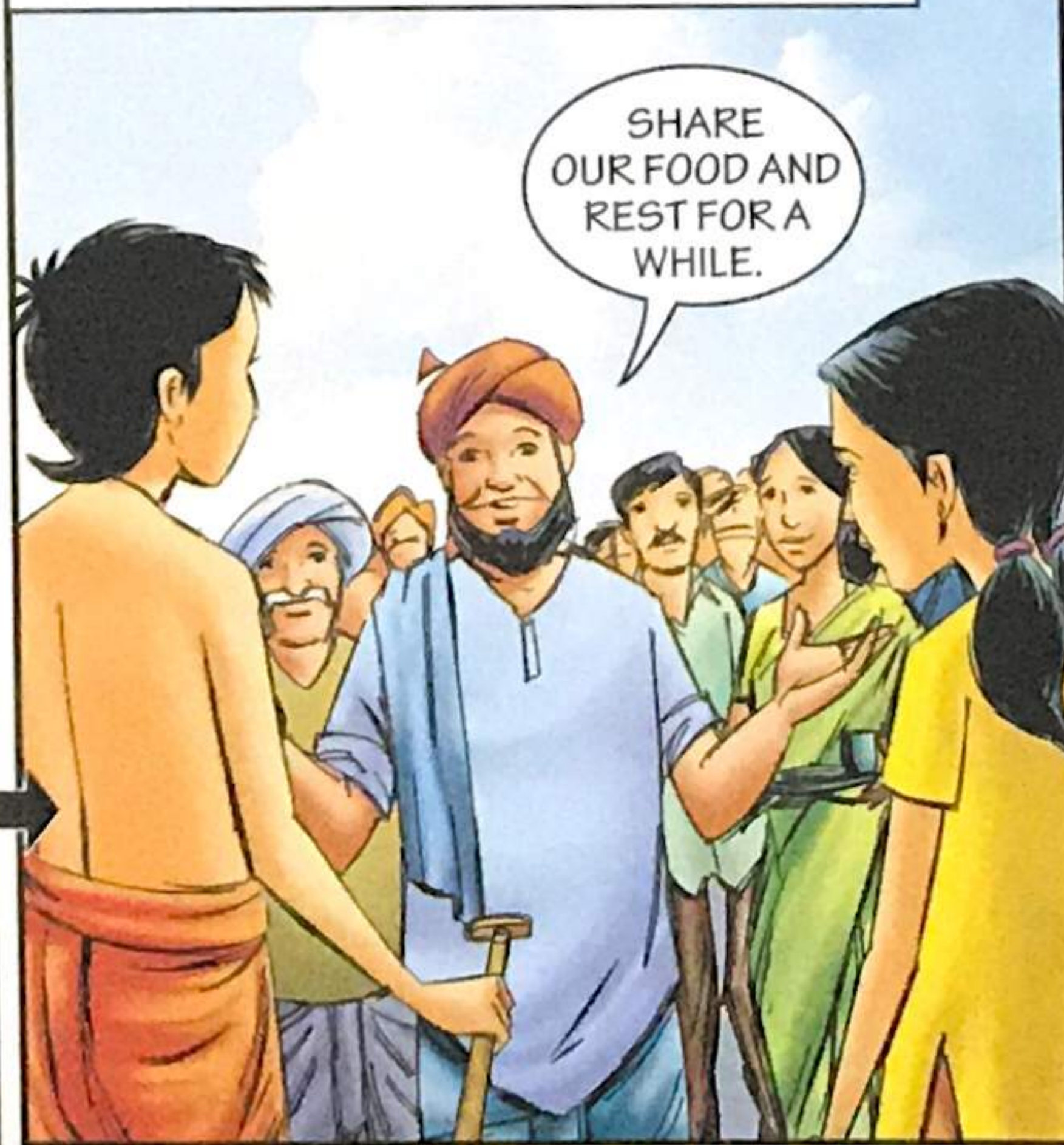
FOR AN HOUR, THEY GLIDED THROUGH THE FOREST MARVELLING AT THE TALL, STURDY TREES AND THE FOLIAGE.



SOON -

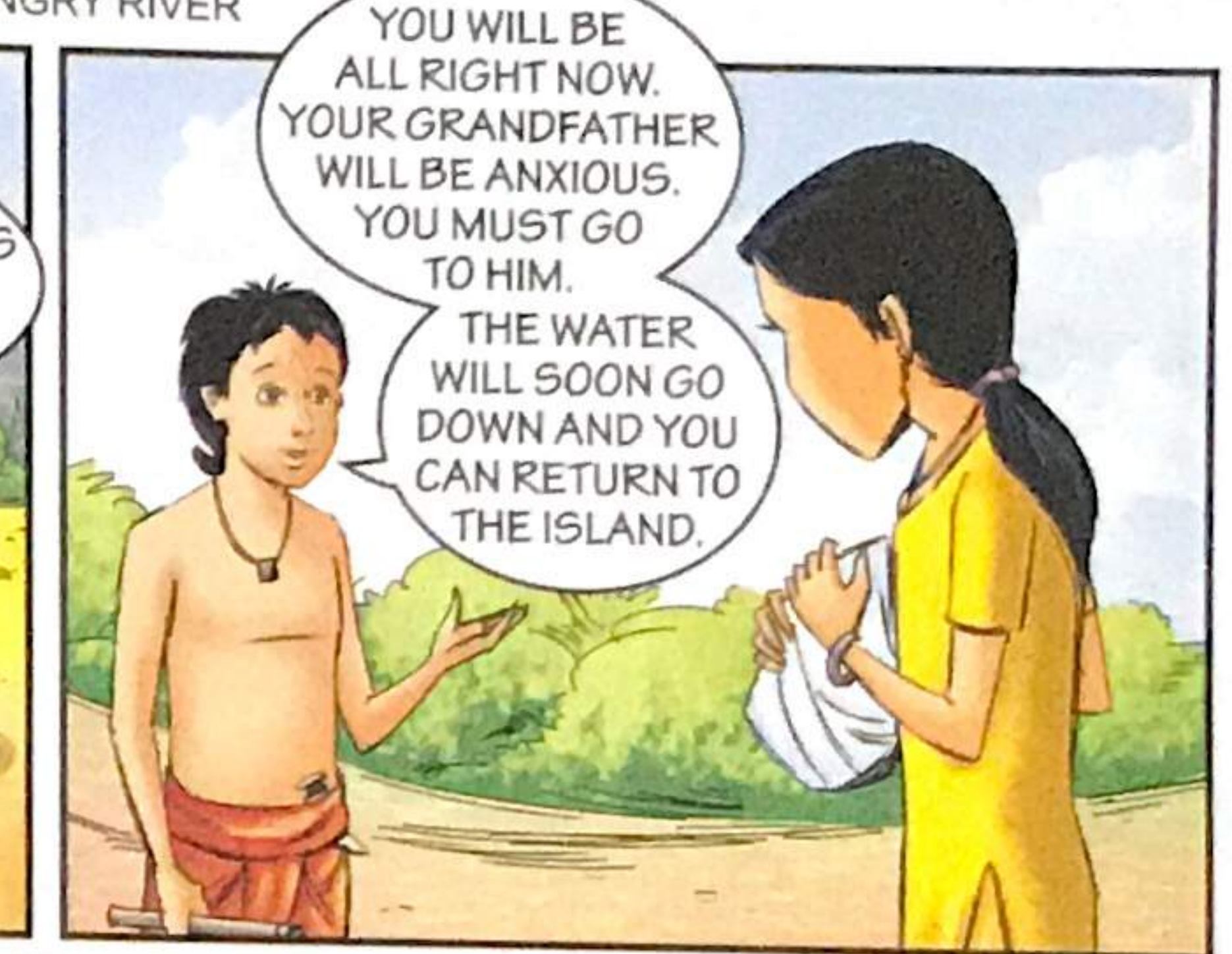
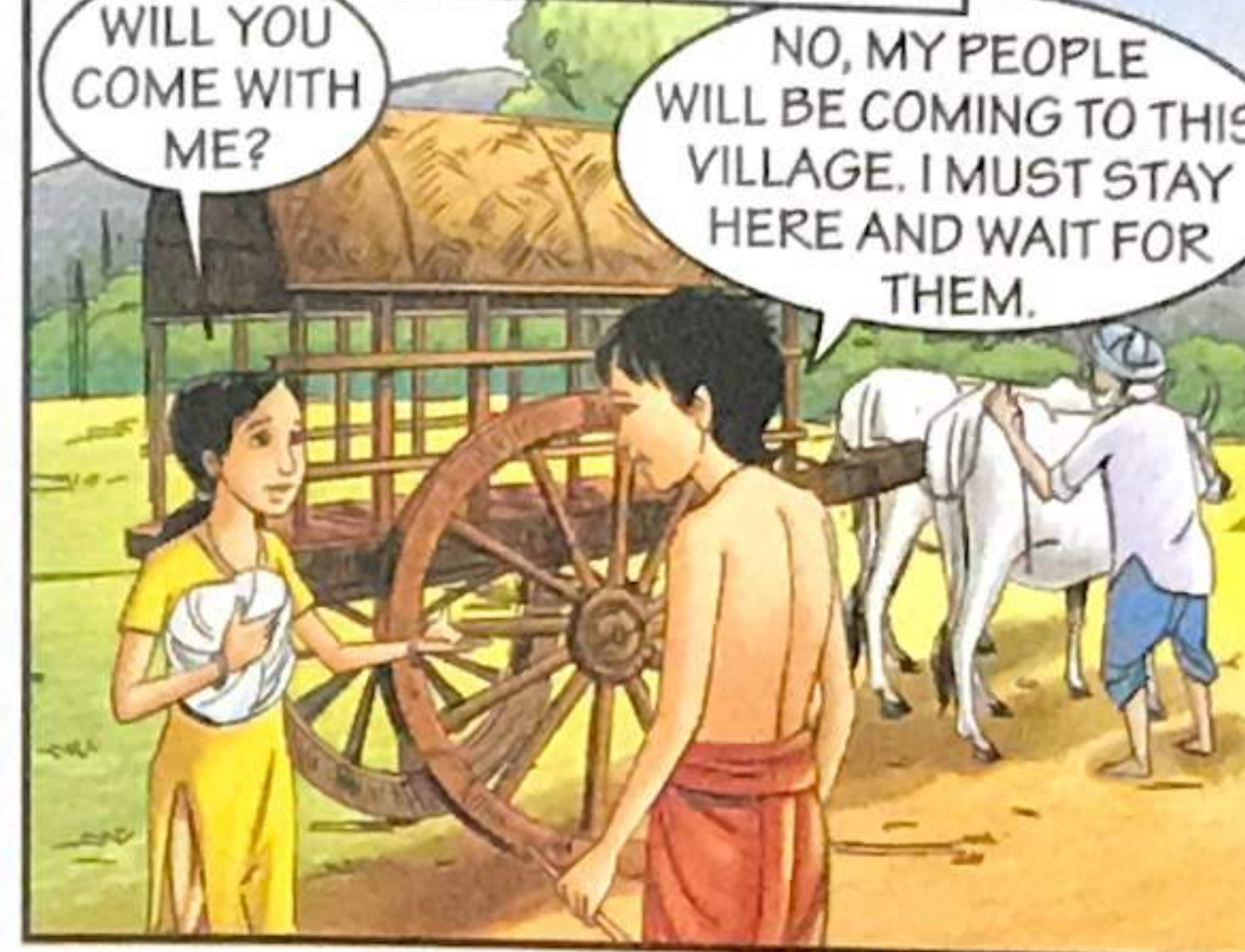


THE VILLAGERS WERE GENEROUS AND HELPFUL.

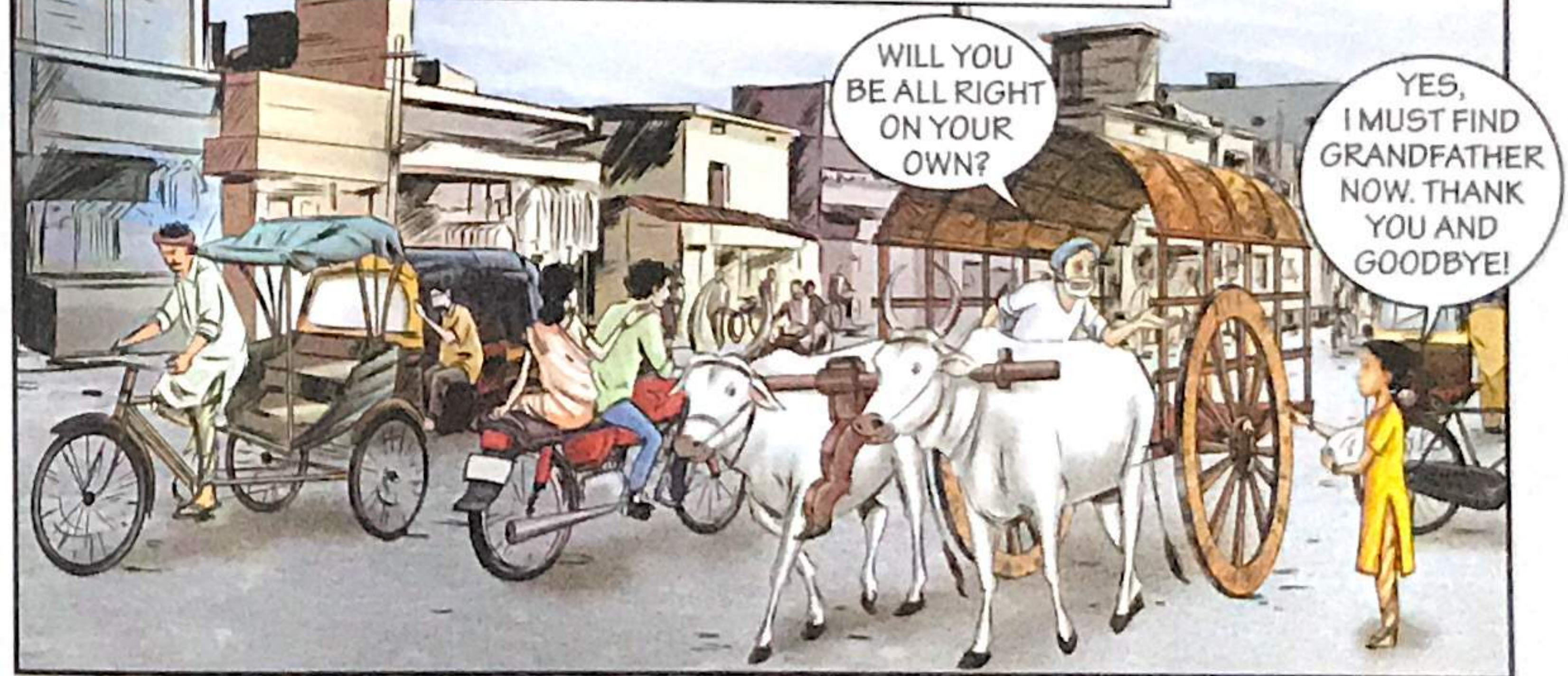


ANGRY RIVER

SITA FOUND AN OLD FARMER, WHO OFFERED TO TAKE HER TO SHAHGANJ.

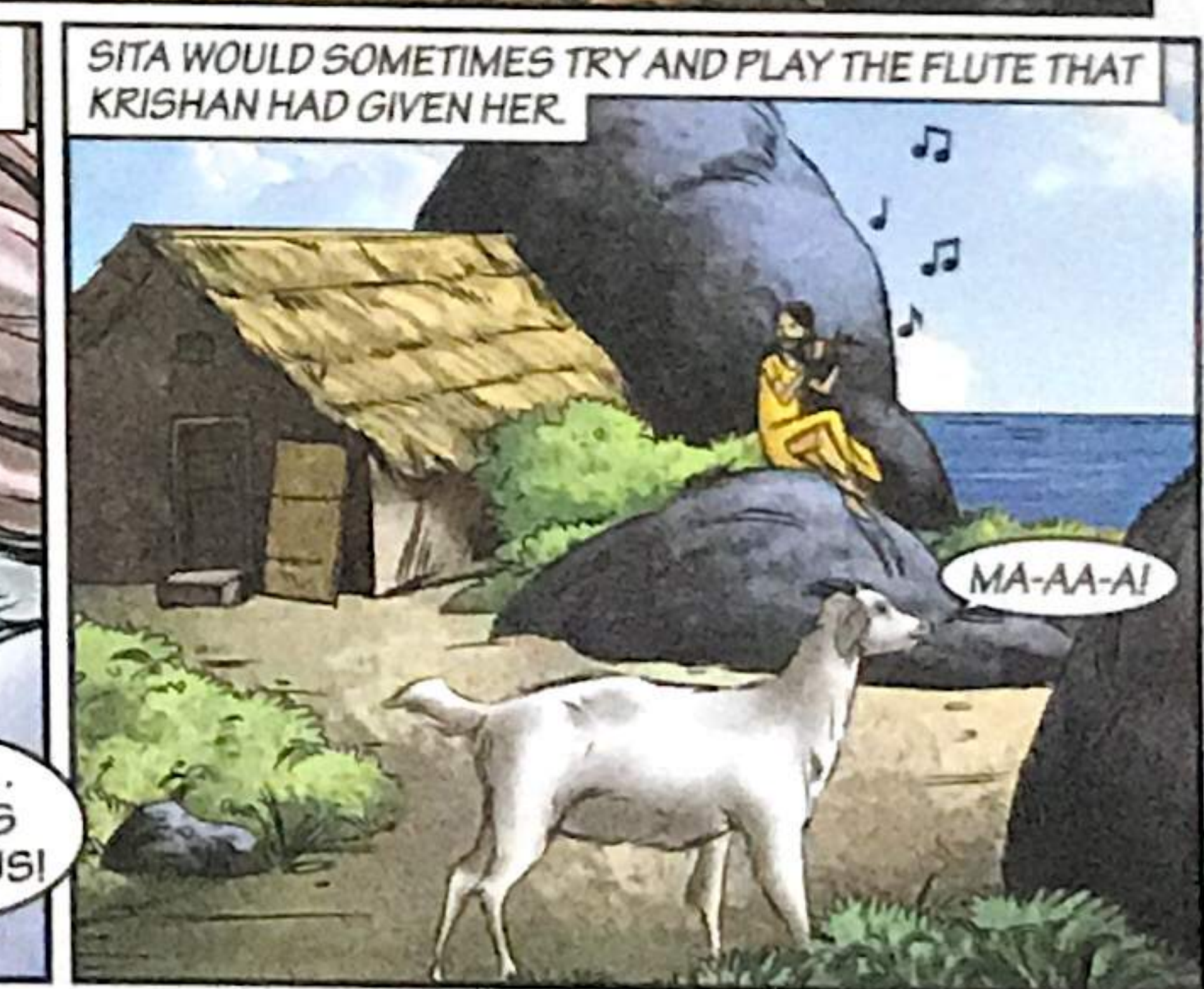
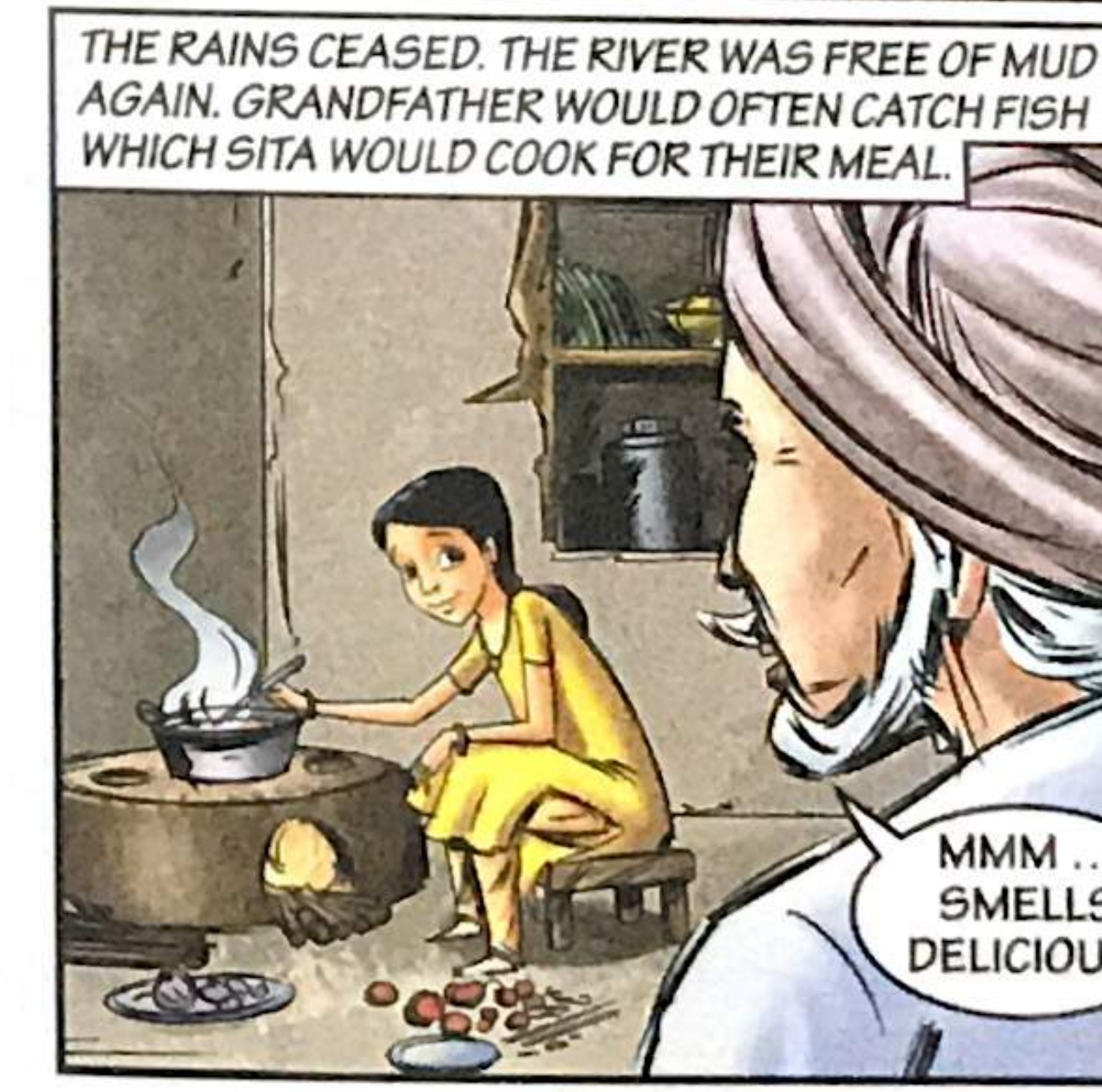
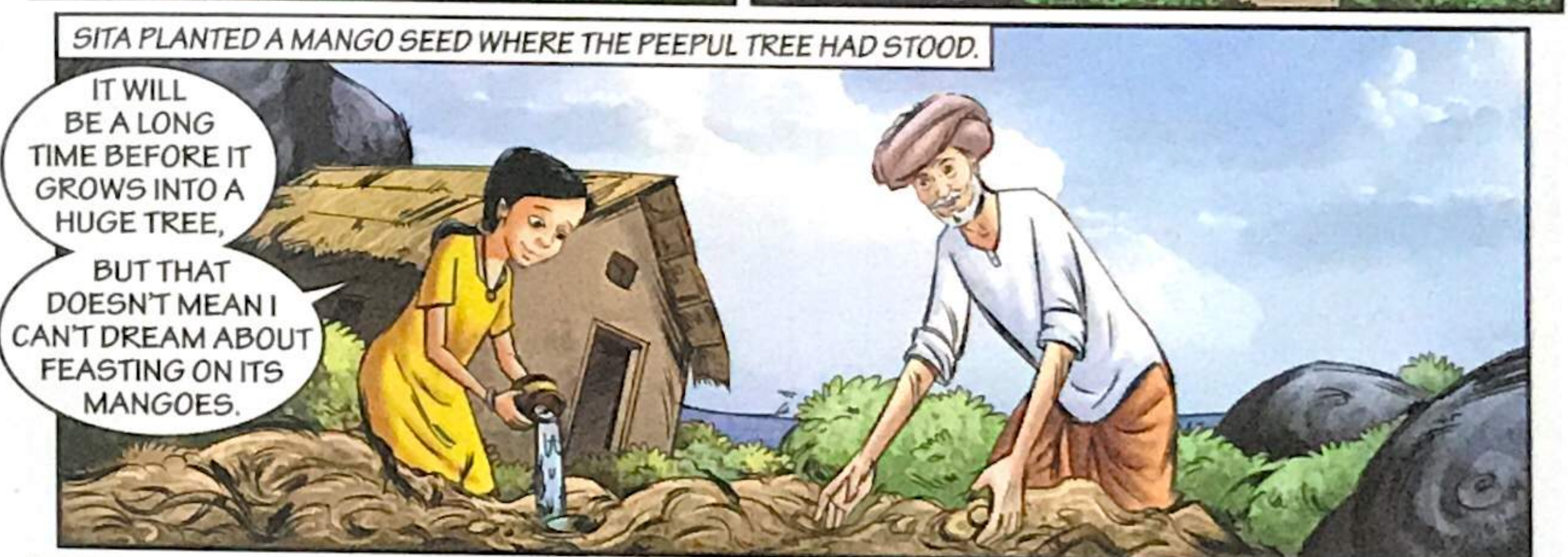
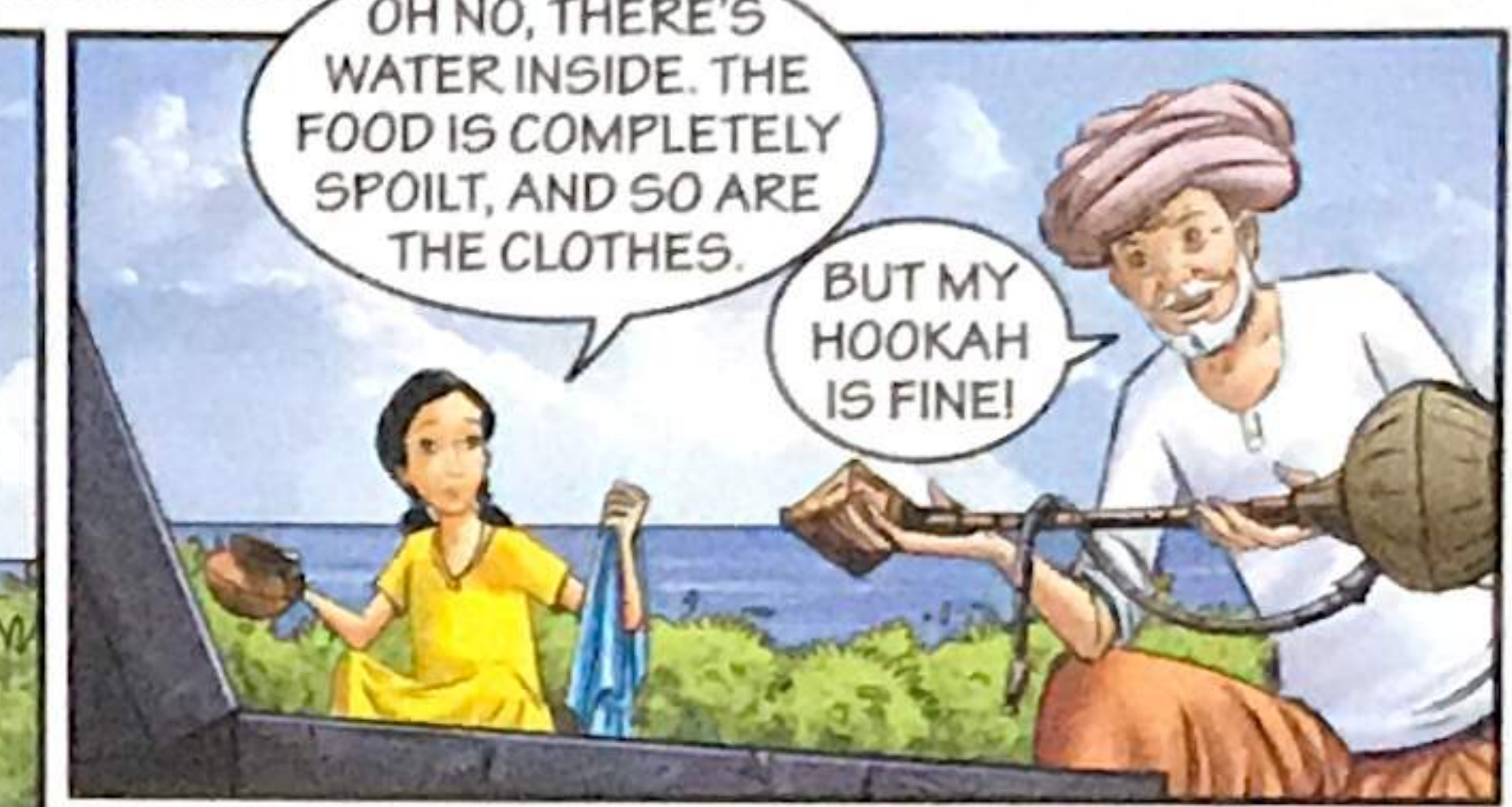
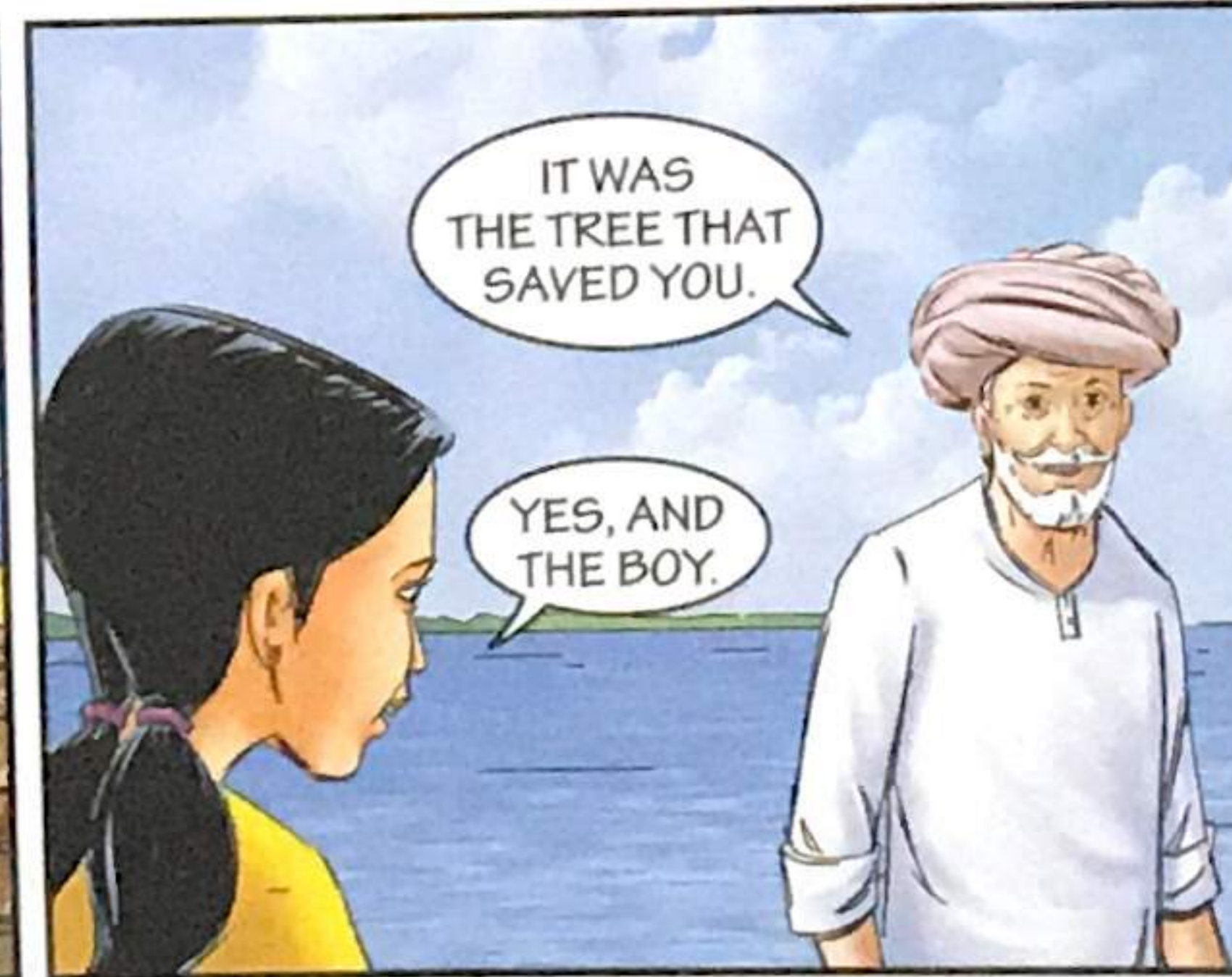
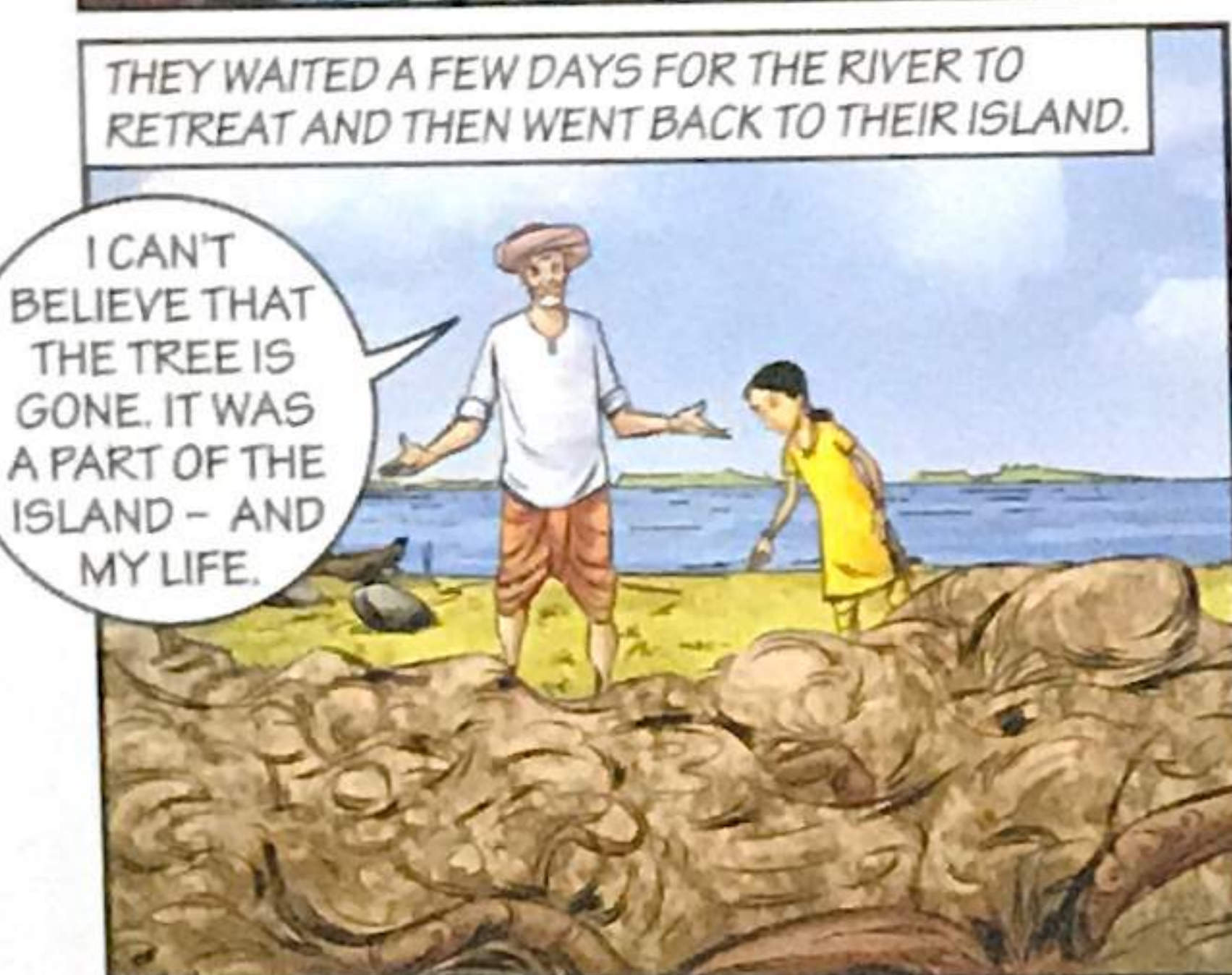


FINALLY, AFTER TRAVELLING FOR A DAY AND A NIGHT, THEY REACHED SHAHGANJ.





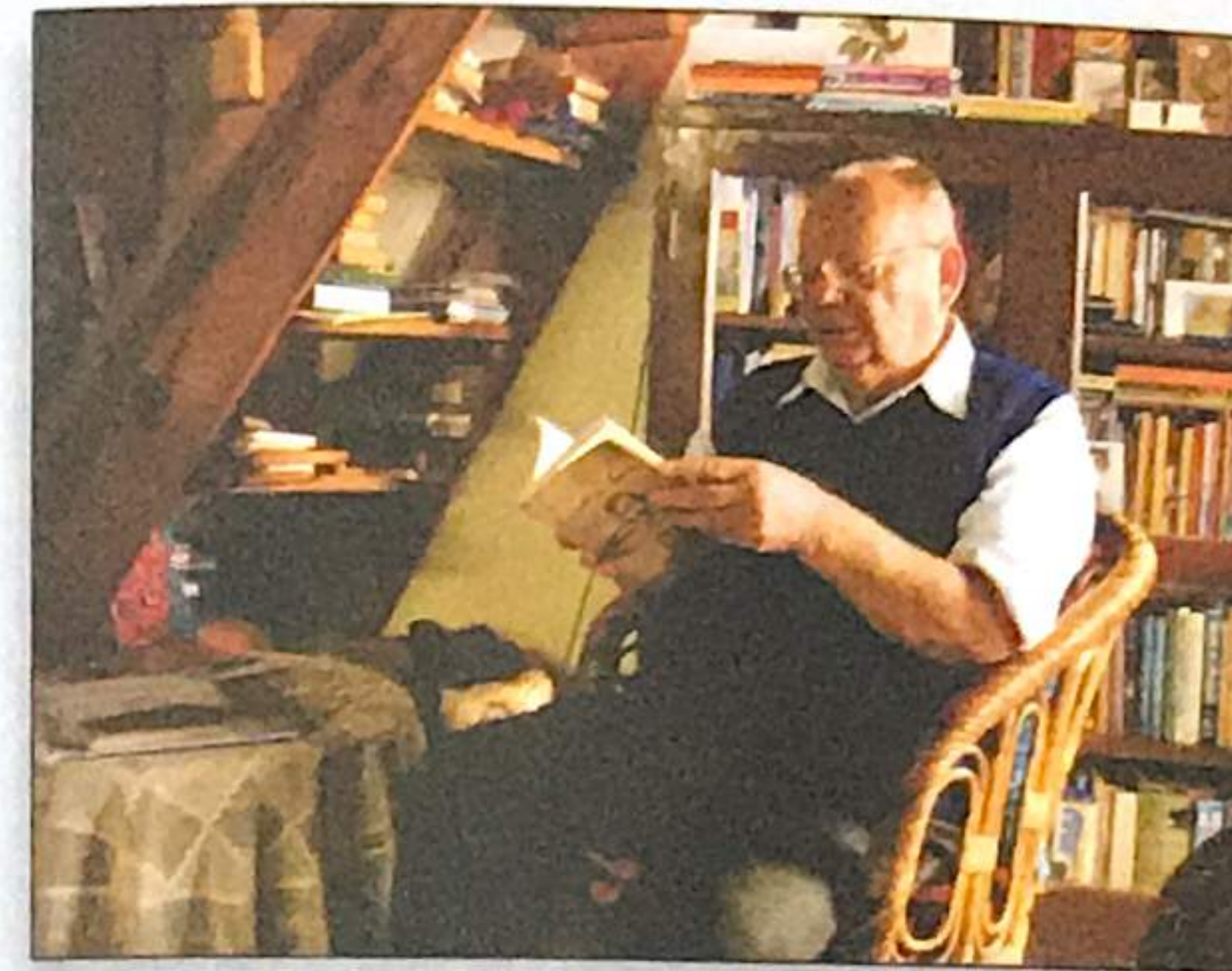
SHE WALKED DOWN THE NARROW LANES OF SHAHGANJ, SEARCHING FOR HER GRANDFATHER. THEN -







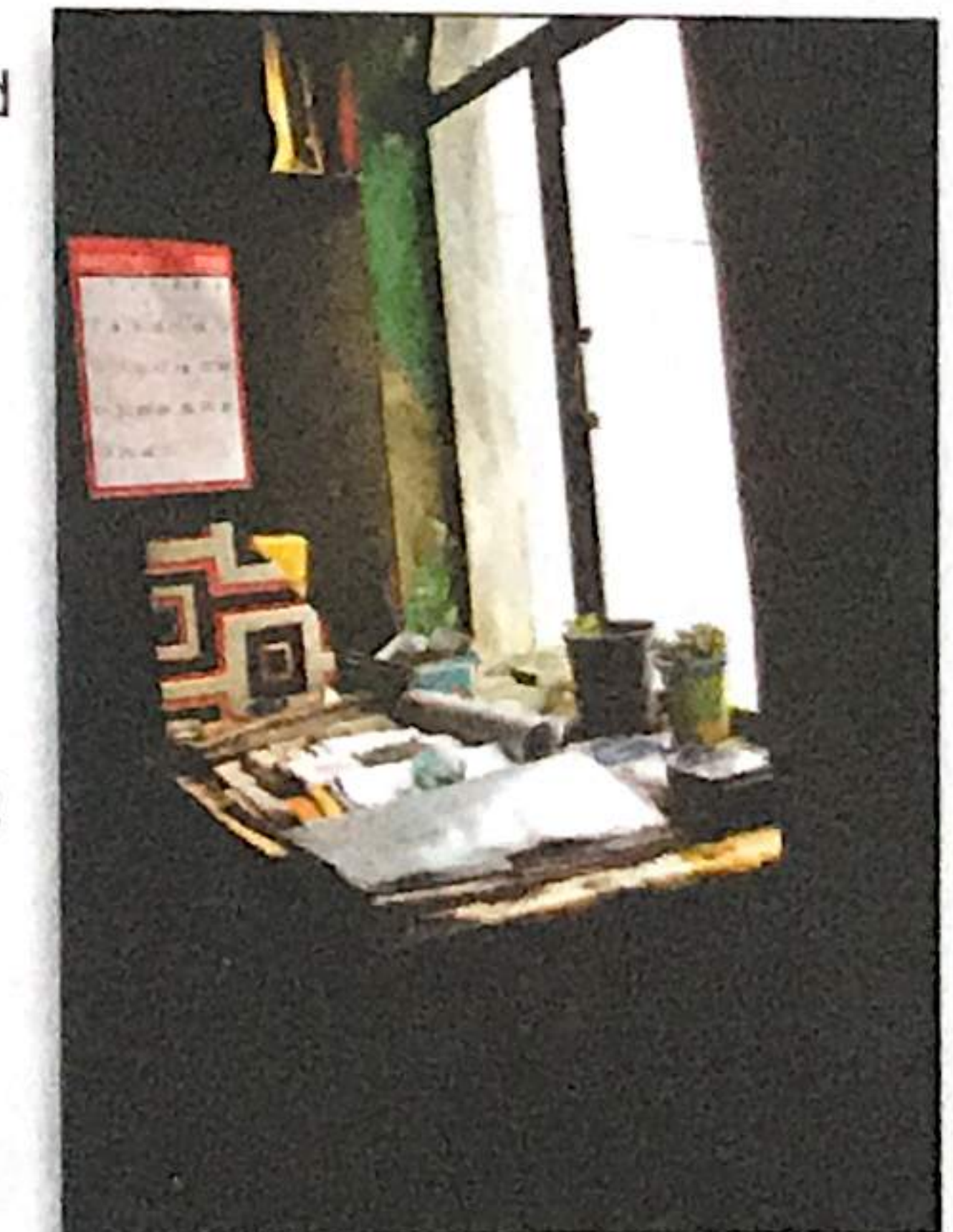
## THE RUSKIN BOND STORY



*Ruskin Bond at home*

Stories are escape routes. They let you slip into the shoes of a character you secretly wish to be like and run away into a world that's very, very different from yours. As a child, my life basically involved going to school and coming back, battling the infamous dust and heat of Calcutta and crossing perilous roads swarming with honking vehicles, and their irate drivers (an adventure in a way, I suppose, but not the kind one usually seeks). It was only natural that I turned to books for respite and Ruskin Bond was one of the writers who gave me just what I needed. Lush with descriptions of dense pine-forests, spring flowers and the adventures of mountain life, Bond's stories were an absolute delight to read. More importantly, they were the kind that stayed with you.

Some time last year, the Amar Chitra Katha editorial had a brainstorming session, during which many great ideas were brewed and allowed to swirl around in our coffee mugs until they were either considered seriously or well, poured reluctantly down the drain. Doing an ACK on a contemporary story was one of the ideas we retained. After all, modern-day stories were also part of our ethos. Even though we all had our favourites, we agreed that if there was one writer whose stories we knew would make brilliant comics, it was Ruskin Bond. "I want to do the script," I said before anybody else had a chance to speak. And that was that.



*A writer's corner*